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ABSTRACT

A study of family day care was made in Casper, Wyoming, (1) to develop a profile of the family day care provider in Casper, (2) to determine the extent of need for family day care services, (3) to evaluate how well those needs were being met, and (4) to provide guidelines for meeting currently unmet and future needs. Data were obtained via questionnaires from 100 randomly selected family day care providers (50 certified and 50 uncertified), 200 parents using all types of day care, and three regulatory agencies (the State and County Departments of Public Assistance and Social Services, and the City of Casper). This report presents 13 recommendations to improve family day care provision in the city, a report of findings with accompanying tables of data, a description of methodology employed, and a summary of results obtained in narrative form. The report of survey findings profiles family day care providers and parents; identifies the role of regulatory agencies and the characteristics of children in family day care; discusses services in terms of regulation, quality, availability, and affordability; and briefly describes existing and needed community support programs. Narrative data concern the turnover rate for providers, the projected number of uncertified providers, community support for day care, employer participation in day care, and provider and parent involvement in resource center activities. (RH)

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CASPER FAMILY DAY CARE STUDY

Funded by the City of Casper

PS 014151

Anjum Majeed
1983

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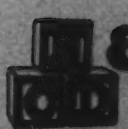

Nutrition & Child Development, Inc.

CASPER
FAMILY DAY CARE
STUDY

(Funded by the City of Casper)

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1983

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BACKGROUND

In recent years, day care has become an area of concern to Americans. The need for day care services has been increasing at an alarming rate. Many possible explanations have been stated for this well documented increasing need. The more obvious reasons for this current emphasis on day care include the inflationary economy, changing family structure, and the need for women to pursue their own interests and develop their potential. Thus, mothers are entering the work force at an increasing rate. This trend is likely to continue. In spite of these changes, children have the same needs as they have had throughout history, the need for continual care, supervision and teaching. As these children will be reared in some sort of day care, the need to assess the availability and quality of care becomes apparent.

Recognizing the need to assess the affordability, quality care and availability of day care, the City of Casper funded the year-long Casper Family Day Care Study project in October, 1982.

NEED

In a study compiled in September, 1981, by the Wyoming State Day Care Consultant, it was discovered that more than 40,000 children in Wyoming were in day care. However, only 11,000 licensed day care spaces were available.

Traditionally, parents prefer to place their children in a home-type environment rather than a large center. Thus, it is the family day care facility which serves a majority of the children receiving out of home care. However, according to the National Day Care Home Study of 1981, 94% of all family day care facilities are unregulated.

Due to this lack of compliance and existence of minimal regulations for family day care certification, it is difficult to ascertain just what the existing conditions for day care children are.

Further, Casper has a transient population with limited extended family ties in the community. Young parents in need of day care do not necessarily have access to family members who can watch the children, either because they have no local extended family or because these relatives themselves may be working. Thus, the responsibility for assuring adequate day care for children falls upon the parent, who may be new in town and unacquainted with anyone who can recommend a good provider, and who may be desperate for someone to watch his/her child.

Finally, it has been stated that child care is a social responsibility. In order for it to function as an integral part of the community, the provider, the consumer and the community should work together.

PURPOSE

The purpose of the Casper Family Day Care Study was to develop a profile of the family day care provider in Casper, to determine the extent of the need for family day care, to evaluate how well those needs are being met, and to provide guidelines for meeting currently unmet needs and future needs.

The study examined all major participants in family day care: the parents, the children, the providers and regulatory agencies. Its major objective was to identify and analyze the following information:

1. the number of certified and uncertified day care providers in Casper;
2. the profile of the family day care provider;
3. the conditions prevalent in family day care;
4. the day-to-day experiences in family day care;
5. the availability, affordability, and quality of family day care;
6. parental needs and attitude toward family day care;
7. the motives behind providing family day care;
8. differences between certified and uncertified family day care; and
9. development of an effective on-going training program for family day care providers.

HYPOTHESES

The study was conducted based on the following hypotheses:

1. the community has a limited knowledge of family day care, its operations and regulations;
2. the operation of family day care facilities is affected by various factors in the community;
3. better comprehension of the family day care scene would aid in developing an effective training and regulatory program; and
4. a majority of family day care providers remain non-certified because of either a lack of knowledge about the regulatory process or a lack of incentive.

RESEARCH PROJECT

The Casper Family Day Care Study was designed as a three-phase study to obtain both broad profiles and detailed information on family day care providers. Research instruments were questionnaires for providers, parents and regulatory agencies, which were designed with the help of a research analyst.

The City of Casper was the funding agency. Nutrition and Child Development, Inc., was totally responsible for developing and implementing the study, analyzing the data and writing this report.

A panel of professionals served as an advisory board to review the study design and evaluate the results.

This report includes a summary of findings, discussion of findings and methodology, and recommendations based on the results of the study.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Conclusions

- There is a defininte need for the following types of day care in Casper: intant care, special needs care, care for children of parents who work shifts and certified home care.

- Most family day care is provided by uncertified providers who keep a low profile and are unable to use local resources.

- Problems in family day care center around the issues of quality, visibility, affordability and regulations.

- A high turnover rate exists in family day care, which forces parents to find new facilities.

- A need for community services exists to improve quality of care and bring professionalism in day care.

- Professionalism in day care can be encouraged by providing local resources such as: resource center, low-interest loans, recognition programs, and public awareness programs. (Availability of resource programs has led to certification of providers.)

- The physical and emotional well-being of children can best be assured by professionalism in day care.

- The community will benefit from adequate, affordable quality care.

Recommendation 1: Family day care regulations should have a two-tier certification process, addressing issues of health and safety, group composition and provider training.

Goal: to ensure minimum health and safety for children and to recognize providers' efforts to improve care

Method:
- Implement Day Care I certification process
  1. meets minimum health and safety standards
  2. is given permission to operate
- Implement Day Care II certification process
  1. is inspected, meets Day Care I standards
  2. receives training in child care topics atleast twice a year
  3. addresses the issue of group composition
  4. addresses program and quality

Recommendation 2: State D-PASS should be the main certifying authority, and should update standards as needed.

Goal: to enforce uniformity in administration of day care policies throughout the state

Method: - the State D-PASS should be responsible for the following:
1. assure adequate funding to the county D-PASS for necessary manpower
2. provide training to certification staff
3. implement statewide campaign for public awareness of day care

Recommendation 3: County D-PASS should regulate and help providers comply, and educate the local community regarding licensing requirements.

Goal: to ensure minimum health and safety and promote quality

Method: - identify providers, give them time and assistance to comply

- promote quality by continuing their assistance to programs which emphasize professionalism, such as day care associations and "Stamp of Approval" program

- educate the community about licensing requirements

Recommendation 4: The City of Casper should continue its fire inspections as needed and address the issues of availability and quality.

Goal: to improve quality in day care and provide needed resources

Method: - continue fire inspections, and provide training and support programs

Recommendation 5: State D-PASS and local government should promote the growth of certified family day care to meet current and projected needs.

Goal: to meet the needs of infant care, shift care, sick child care and after or before school care

Method: - promote provision of infant care by state funding to supplement pay for this service

- make grants available through state and local governments for the purchase of cribs and other necessary equipment

- encourage and train specific providers to provide sick child care or child care for parents who work shifts

- accomodate the demand for school-age children by allowing for a limited number of additional school-age children in homes, not counting them as part of the regular certification capacity

Recommendation 6: Public policies should be directed toward taking measures to protect the children and to ensure that the provision and usage of day care is feasible for the providers as well as the parents.

Goal: to create a balance between the cost of care to parents, quality of care and providers' income

Method:
- State Legislature should appropriate funds for the following:
  1. manpower for certification of family day care
  2. purchase of direct day care services to help families to be self-sufficient
  3. support programs for day care such as resource center and low-interest loans

Recommendation 7: Family day care providers should view day care as a profession, should see the value of being trained, and should provide quality care.

Goal: to improve providers' self-image and to improve quality in day care

Method:
- County D-PASS, the local government and the parents are responsible for the following:
  1. show providers the value of training, and teach them what constitutes good care
  2. encourage providers to assess their own programs and improve their care by participating in programs such as "Stamp of Approval."

Recommendation 8: A career ladder for family day care should be established. State D-PASS, the local D-PASS, academic institutions and the private sector should play key roles.

Goal: to develop a career ladder and bring professionalism to family day care

Method:
- develop and support programs such as "Stamp of Approval," evaluation of providers' performance, more pay for better training, and specialized providers

Recommendation 9: The community should recognize the support programs for day care as a necessary part of assuring quality.

Goal: to assure well-being of children by training providers

Method:
- offer providers such resources as those available through a resource center, day care information and referral, and day care associations
- make available through local governments low-interest loans for providers to purchase necessary toys and equipment and bring the facilities to code compliance
- offer children benefits of children's programs, trips and toy loans

Recommendation 10: The regulatory agencies should educate the community and parents regarding family day care.

Goal: to assure community awareness of the importance of quality day care programs and regulations

Method:
- implement on-going media campaign about statutory requirements and what constitutes quality care

Recommendation 11: Parents should take an active part in their children's day care.

Goal: to improve the quality of day care

Method:
- choose not to take children to marginal providers
- be aware of what constitutes quality care and demand it
- report harmful situations to the local D-PASS

Recommendation 12: The community should encourage the employers to participate in their employees' day care.

Goal: to improve productivity by assuring quality care for employee's children

Method:
- inform employers of tax benefits and importance of using certified, well trained providers (the Economic Recovery Act of 1981 allows the employers to subsidize or pay for their employees' day care as part of the fringe benefit packet and deduct the expenses as normal and necessary business expenses.)
- employers can purchase vouchers or slots in selected existing facilities which are emphasizing quality

Recommendation 13: The City of Casper should pilot the Community Awareness program for day care in Casper.

Goal: to make the community more aware of the day care needs and statutory requirements

Method: - to have a year-long awareness campaign and assess its effectiveness with regards to regulatory compliance, provision of quality, and involvement from the private sector and the employer.

SUMMARY OF THE CASPER FAMILY DAY CARE STUDY

I. Purpose

The purpose of the Casper Family Day Care Study was to develop a detailed composite of family day care in Casper, and to provide information to the day care community on the unmet needs in day care and methods to improve quality in day care.

II. Methodology

This was a three-phase study designed to gather information from three main sources. The research instrument consisted of a set of three questionnaires, designed to collect data from the providers, the parents and the regulators, respectively.

The data reported were obtained from 100 randomly selected family day care providers (50 certified and 50 uncertified); 200 parents who were users of all types of day care, and the three regulatory agencies, the State D-PASS, the County D-PASS and the City of Casper.

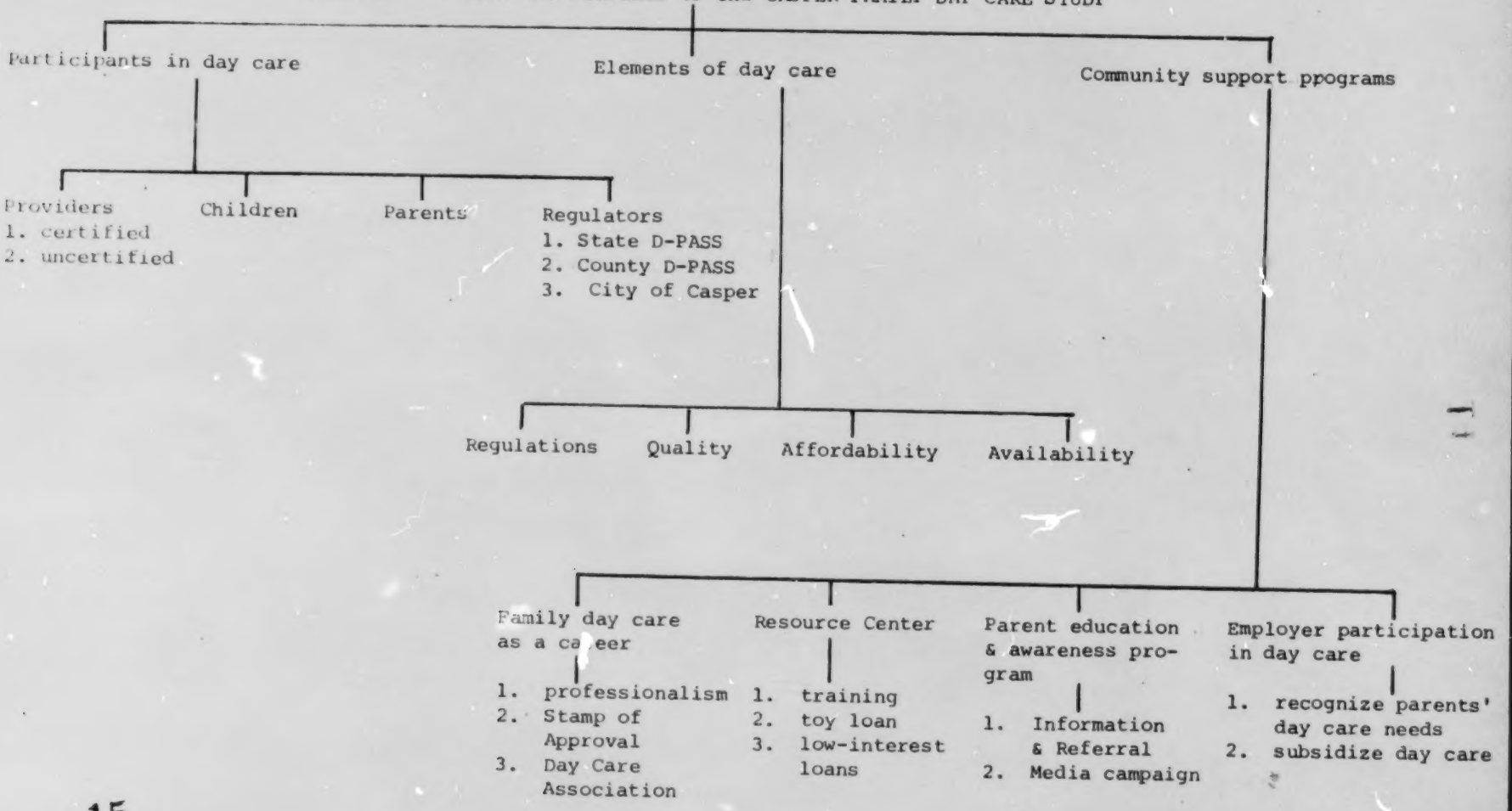
The projection of the number of certified and uncertified providers in Casper is based on information obtained from multiple recruitment methods and estimates of uncertified slots projected by the State D-PASS.

III. Findings of the Casper Family Day Care Study

A. There are 550 family day care providers in Casper.
   1. 100 of the facilities are certified and 450 uncertified, though not all of the uncertified facilities are necessarily out of compliance.
   2. 2100 children are in family day care, 500 in certified and 1600 in uncertified.
   3. The average number of children in a certified facility is 5.04 and in an uncertified facility 3.52, including the providers' own children.

B. Participants in family day care include the provider, the parent, the children and the regulatory agencies.
   1. Characteristics of the family day care provider
      a. The certified day care provider is older by eight years, has held significantly more professional jobs outside the home, and has been providing day care for a longer period than her counterpart.
      b. The certified day care provider is more apt to view herself as a professional, as demonstrated by her willingness and desire to use the community resources, by membership in day care associations and provision of more stable care.
      c. Little or no significant differences are observed across the board in areas such as reasons for providing care, types of services offered, education and the socio-economic status of the provider.

FORMAT OF THE REPORTED FINDINGS OF THE CASPER FAMILY DAY CARE STUDY



d. A majority of the providers are married; 76.5% of certified and 96% of the uncertified. Both groups of providers possess the key ingredient for providing quality care, which is a liking for the children.

2. Characteristics of the day care parent
   a. A typical consumer of day care in Casper is a female, 29 years of age, and with one child attending day care. She chooses family day care on the basis of a perception of better care/more personal attention, and convenience and proximity to her home. She is satisfied with her day care arrangement and bases her selection and evaluation on the personality, character and reliability of the provider, as well as on her child's opportunity for development.
   b. Family day care seems to be the type of facility most parents (52%) prefer for their children. Statistically significant reasons for choosing family day care over larger facilities include the following:
      (1) shared values with the provider
      (2) convenience and/or proximity to work
      (3) perceived better care/personal attention
      (4) greater flexibility in hours
   c. Thirty-three percent of parents view regulations as designed to protect the health and safety of children. However, 37% of the parents feel that it is the parents who are responsible for quality in day care beyond the health and safety issues. Fifty-three percent of the parents support the City of Casper's involvement in day care to improve quality, monitor and fill the gap left by state regulations and to assist the Department of Public Assistance and Social Services.

3. Role of the regulatory agencies
   a. The City of Casper
      The City perceives its role as that of enforcing building and zoning codes, and has expressed interest in provider training, resource centers and assistance to parents and the Department of Public Assistance and Social Services. Forty percent of the day care providers indicate they would like the City to be involved with monitoring and regulating, while 23% of the providers believed the City's main role should be implementing training and awareness programs. A majority of the parents also supported the City's involvement in day care.
      It is the recommendation of this study that the City continue its fire inspections as needed, and address the issue of availability and quality in day care by providing training and support programs.
   b. State Department of Public Assistance and Social Services
      The State Department of Public Assistance and Social Services is the certifying authority responsible for setting day care standards and providing training to county Department of Public Assistance and Social Services and providers. However,

formal training of county Department of Public Assistance and Social Services certification staff is minimal and there are no on-going provider training programs.

The study recommends that the State Department of Public Assistance and Social Services continue to be the certifying authority, reviewing and updating day care standards as needed, and be responsible for enforcing uniformity in administration of day care regulations throughout the state. Further, the State Department of Public Assistance and Social Services should assure adequate funding to the local Department of Public Assistance and Social Services to provide for the manpower needed to certify family day care and to provide training.

The State should educate local governments on day care, its needs and the importance of quality, and on what local governments can do to help improve the day care situation in their own communities.

c. Natrona County Department of Public Assistance and Social Services

The county Department of Public Assistance and Social Services is the branch of the State Department of Public Assistance and Social Services responsible for processing family day care applications, monitoring family day care and investigating child abuse or neglect complaints. Staff/dollar limitations is one of the problems faced by the county Department of Public Assistance and Social Services.

It is the recommendation of this study that:

(1) County Department of Public Assistance and Social Services should have an adequate number of trained staff (one staff per 100 providers), to serve as regulators as well as counselors to day care providers.

(2) County Department of Public Assistance and Social Services with adequate funding from the State, should implement a true certification program, with inspections rather than registration.

(3) County Department of Public Assistance and Social Services should actively identify services, and ferret out those providers who are marginal. After giving them adequate time and assistance to comply, the county Department of Public Assistance and Social Services should prosecute those providers who fail to make the necessary improvements.

(4) County Department of Public Assistance and Social Services should implement an on-going community education program to inform the community of the statutory requirements and that it is illegal to operate a day care without a certificate.

(5) County Department of Public Assistance and Social Services should continue working with the local providers and community groups to facilitate the development of day care associations, day care information and referrals, "Stamp of Approval" programs and parent education.

C. Elements in Family Day Care

1. Regulations

a. The purpose of current regulations is to ensure the safety of children, and to identify providers and make them aware of minimum requirements. However, regulations do not guarantee safety; all they guarantee is visibility and a commitment to safety.

b. Problems associated with regulations include the following:

(1) need to be more stringent and more specific, need more inspections, should be enforced and have appropriate penalties.

(2) Lack of uniformity in enforcement.

(3) Lack of perceived value and knowledge of regulations on the part of parents and providers.

(4) Variance of priority.

(5) Staff/dollar limitations.

c. Family day care should be regulated because of the following reasons:

(1) Family day care is a profession which requires high standards to assure the well-being and safety of children.

(2) Parents lack the expertise necessary to assess whether a facility is safe for their child.

(3) Certification increases provider awareness of the importance of physical setting and nutritional needs.

(4) Certification makes the provider more visible, thus enabling potential consumers to locate day care more easily.

(5) Certification and stability in provision of care go hand-in-hand. The study results indicate a turnover rate of 9.72% among the certified providers as opposed to 62% among the uncertified providers over the same period of time.

(6) Family day care providers have potential for abuse because of isolation, lack of knowledge in child development and uncertain safety and health standards for children. According to information obtained earlier from the County Department of Public Assistance and Social Services, more child abuse cases are reported against family day care than any other type of day care.

d. Methods to help uncertified family day care providers comply with regulations centers on six main issues:

- ignorance of the law on the part of the provider
- disregard for the law
- lack of perceived value for regulations
- lack of benefits
- lack of enforcement
- lack of public knowledge of day care regulation

The family day care providers can be brought to regulatory compliance by employing the following methods:

(1) Communities should be informed about day care statutes through an on-going statewide media campaign conducted by

the State Department of Public Assistance and Social Services

(2) With added manpower, the county Department of Public Assistance and Social Services should be responsible for monitoring newspaper and bulletin board advertisements since 21% of the parents locate their day care through advertisements in the newspaper and on bulletin boards.
(Please note: current day care laws do not require the Department of Public Assistance and Social Services to actively search for uncertified facilities)

(3) Since 34.5% of day care is located through referrals, and since employers can serve as an important source of referrals, they should be informed of the statutory requirements and the importance of referring certified facilities.

(4) Once uncertified providers are identifed, they should be informed of the regulations and shown the benefits of compliance, such as Child Care Food Program reimbursement, toy loan library, referral service and professionalism in day care and provider recognition programs.

(5) Providers should be given adequate time to comply but those who fail to comply should be prosecuted.

2. Quality in Family Day Care

a. Environment in family day care

This study evaluated the environment and provision of quality in family day care homes using the following criteria:

(1) Planned daily program and educational component
(2) Training of the providers
(3) Professionalism
(4) Types of meals and snacks
(5) Physical setting
(6) Stability of care
(7) Experience in child care
(8) Day to day provider child interaction

The study results indicated differences between the certified and uncertified providers in areas such as physical setting, meals and snacks, stability of care and emphasis on professionalism, with certified providers faring better than uncertified. Concerns which emerged due to these differences include the following:

(a) Since a large percentage of children in uncertified facilities are under two years of age (43%), the high turnover rate among uncertified providers and its effect on infants emotional well-being is questioned.

(b) Because the quality of the physical space does influence adults' and children's behavior, the fact that uncertified facilities give less emphasis to physical setting causes concern. An environment lacking in appropriate equipment has the potential to offer poor quality care.

(c) Since inadequate choices and limited variety in foods offered to children can fail to provide adequate nutrients, let alone to create an environment which fosters good eating habits, children's nutrition in uncertified facilities is a concern.

(d) Since research indicates that provider training and professionalism has direct effects on quality, this lack of emphasis on training and professionalism among uncertified providers becomes an area of concern. It also has the potential for causing poor quality care.

In areas such as planned programs, provider-child interaction, use of television, toilet training, health and safety, and supervision, few differences were observed between the two groups of providers. Both groups had considerable room to improve.

It is the conclusion of this study that both groups can benefit in <u>all</u> areas used as indicators of quality.

b. Measures to improve quality in Family Day Care:

Quality in family day care can be improved through such measures as inspections, community education, parent involvement, provider training and provider recognition. Key roles are played by the parents, providers, regulatory agencies, and policy makers.

(1) Providers can improve the quality of their care if shown the value of training and taught what constitutes good care. They can then assess their own programs and provide components necessary for the normal growth of children.

(2) 37% of the parents indicated that it is their reponsibility to ensure quality and they should exercise their control by not choosing to take their children to marginal facilities. Further, they should report improper facilities to the Department of Public Assistance and Social Services.

(3) The regulatory agencies' responsibilities include inspections, uniformity of enforcement and community education.

(4) The responsibilities of the policy makers include appropriating adequate funds which will make available programs such as training, low-interest loans, toy lending libraries, and provider recognition programs.

c. Availability of Family Day Care

The problem of family day care in Casper centers on quantity as well as quality.

(1) Family day care homes are not easily visible in the community.

(a) A total of 99 certified family day care facilities exist in Casper, serving some 500 children.

(b) Since the study indicates there are 2100 children in Casper using family day care, the need for certified day care becomes apparent.

(2) Other areas in which current needs are unmet are the following:
   (a) care for children whose parents work shifts
   (b) care for sick children/children with special needs
   (c) before or after school care
   (d) preschool curriculum in day care
   (e) care for infants

d. Affordability of family day care
The affordability of day care can be analyzed from three different perspectives: the provider, the parent and the policy maker.

(1) From the perspective of the provider, day care is not a lucrative business.
She has problems collecting money. On the average, a certified provider makes $3.18/hour, and out of this limited income she is expected to purchase toys and supplies and pay for maintenance and repairs.

(2) From the parents' perspective, the day care fee competes with essential family expenses such as food, shelter and clothing.

A single mother making $6/hour with two children in day care overspends her take home pay of $806.40 by $215. She pays $289/month for her two children's day care and is not eligible for day care assistance. In order for this parent to continue working, she needs assistance with her day care.

(3) Policy makers should focus on the dilemma of day care and take appropriate measures to protect children. They should recognize that day care is here to stay, and that a balance must exist between the cost of care to parents, quality of care and providers' income. By appropriating funds for day care, they will be helping families be self-sufficient and promoting employment of parents.

D. Community support programs
Based on the information obtained, it is the recommendation of the study to continue some of the existing programs and to implement new programs to improve quality and stimulate parent involvement. These programs include:

- Resource Center and toy loan library
- Day Care Association
- Development of a day care career ladder
- "Stamp of Approval" program for provider recognition
- Day Care Information and Referral
- Day Care Advisory Board

Employer participation in day care should also be explored.
1. Employers should be informed of the tax benefits to them as well as to the employees.
2. Employers should recognize the importance of quality day care for the children of their employees in improving employee productivity and attitude toward the employer.

PARTICIPANTS IN FAMILY DAY CARE

Profile of the Family Day Care Providers

For the purpose of the Casper Family Day Care Study, it was determined to categorize family day care facilities into two groups, certified and uncertified. Although some of the certified providers are participants in the Child Care Food Program, which could fall under a third category of sponsored providers, the link with the sponsoring agency is minimal and the providers operate independently.

Family day care offers the community a natural resource for providing care for children of working mothers in a home-like environment. Parents show a preference for family day care over any other type of out-of-home care, (The Casper study indicated parental preference for family day care to be 44%; group home care 15%; and center 32%), and since an increasing number of mothers are returning to work shortly after the birth of their children, it is expected that family day care will probably be the type which will accommodate the increasing demand for toddler and infant care.

One question which arises is "who are these providers who offer the out-of-home care for the large number of this nation's children?" Although several studies have attempted to answer this question at the national level, the Casper Family Day Care Study sought answers at the local level. The providers were divided into two groups and the study obtained information on the providers in the following areas: age, education, work experience, length of time in day care, number of children in day care, reasons for becoming day care providers and reasons for turnover.

The certified provider was significantly older, had held more professional jobs outside the home and stayed in day care longer than her/his uncertified counterpart. The certified provider was more apt to view day care as a profession and would take advantage of the resources available in the community such as training, the Child Care Food Program and the toy lending library. Little or no significant difference was observed across the board in areas such as reasons for becoming day care providers, types of services offered, education and the socioeconomic status of the two groups. However, larger numbers of certified providers were single heads of the household.

The family day care providers, irrespective of their regulatory status, are from a diverse socioeconomic background. Their annual family income ranged from less than $10,000 to more than $25,000 with little or no difference between the two groups. A majority of the providers surveyed were married, 76.5% of the certified and 96% of the uncertified. A higher percentage (19.6%) of the certified providers were also the head of the household, as opposed to only 4% of the uncertified. Family day care providers represented all adult age groups, ranging in age from 19 to 73, but the vast majority was between 22 and 45 years. The certified providers were older

than their counterparts by about eight years, with an average age of 38.6 years for certified providers and 30.3 years for uncertified.[1] Similar findings were reported by the National Family Day Care Study.

For the most part, interviewers observed that the participating day care providers, both certified and uncertified, were warm and enjoyed working with the children. Family day care providers were more commonly called "babysitters" and frequently referred to themselves as "babysitters."

Types of Services Offered

Family day care, both certified and uncertified, offered choices to parents ranging from types of service to flexibility in hours. Children of varied age groups were accommodated (Table PR-9). Almost all of the family day care providers offered daytime care. Other services offered by the majority of the certified and uncertified providers included meals and drop-in day care. A large number of day care providers indicated that they would accept children suffering from upper respiratory ailments. One provider so appropriately summarized the sentiments of the family day care providers on sick child care: "When one member of the family is sick, we can't ask them to leave; we all go through it together."

Many of the providers also expressed a willingness to accommodate parents' needs by assisting school age children with their homework, washing and ironing the children's clothes, and shopping.

Although 25.5% of the certified and 36% of the uncertified providers indicated that they would care for a handicapped child if asked, they did not at the time of the interview necessarily have handicapped children in their care.

Night-time care was provided by one-third of both the groups, but members of both groups were hesitant to take children of parents who worked shifts.

Not much difference was observed between the certified and uncertified providers in services offered. Both groups were found to offer a variety of services and possessed the potential for unlimited resources to meet the needs of working parents.

Reasons for Providing Day Care

Both groups cited "personal family commitments", such as care for their own children, as the number one reason for providing day care. This was followed by their interest in working with children (Table PR-5). Economics, requests from friends and/or relatives, and a desire to stay at home were the other main reasons which prompted them to offer day care. These reasons were fairly consistent among both groups, with the exception of economics, which was a higher motivator among the uncertified group.

Table PR - 9

TYPES OF SERVICES OFFERED BY DAY CARE PROVIDERS

TYPES OF SERVICES	TOTAL NUMBER OF PROVIDERS	LICENSED PROVIDERS	UNLICENSED PROVIDERS
	(%)	(%)	(%)
Day time care	99.0	100.0	98.0
Meals	91.1	96.1	86.0
Drop-in day care	70.3	72.5	68.0
Sick child care	52.5	54.9	50.0
Transportation	48.5	43.1	54.0
School/homework assistance	36.6	43.1	30.0
Night time care	33.7	33.3	34.0
Preschool program	31.7	33.3	30.0
Washing/ironing clothes	31.7	33.3	30.0
Care for handi-capped	30.7	25.5	36.0
Rotating shifts	17.8	19.6	16.0
Shopping	16.8	17.6	16.0
*Other	47.5	56.9	38.0
	n = 101	n = 51	n = 50

*Others include:

1. after school care

Table PR - 5

REASONS FOR BECOMING A DAY CARE PROVIDER

REASONS	LICENSED PROVIDERS (%)	UNLICENSED PROVIDERS (%)
Personal family commitments	37.0	30.0
I enjoy working with children	17.0	21.0
Requests from friends	13.0	9.0
I prefer to stay at home	13.0	13.0
Economics	12.0	18.0
I lost my previous employment	2.0	1.0
I prefer to be self-employed	1.0	4.0
*Other	5.0	1.0
	n = 51	n = 50

*Others include:

1. neighborhood children at my home anyway
2. wanted something to do
3. we didn't have any children of our own

Indicators of Provider Professionalism

Characteristics often used as indicators of professionalism in day care include education, experience and training, although research does not conclusively show that there is a correlation between a provider's education level and her/his performance level.[1] In order to present an overall view of the providers' profile, however, it was considered necessary to address this aspect. A majority of the providers surveyed had completed high school and had some college (Table PR-2). No significant differences were observed between the two groups of providers. Some of the providers (10.9% of the total sample) possessed college degrees, while 12.9% of the providers (11.8% certified and 14% uncertified) did not complete a high school education.

Experience is another often-used indicator of provider qualification. Most of the out-of-home work experience reported in the study centered around child care, secretarial work, food service and retail clerking, although some of the providers had held such varied jobs as a gas station manager, lifeguard, bellhop and auditor (Table PR-4).

As for experience in child care, 54.9% of the certified providers reported their average experience was 3.88 years and 44% of the uncertified providers reported 4.45 years. However, this experience in child care included care of their own children, providing family day care and any work experience such as working in a day care or church nursery.

The study found differences between the certified and uncertified providers in the length of time they had been in day care (Table PR-1). The study results indicated that 21.5% of the certified providers versus 50% of the uncertified providers reported that they had been providing family day care for less than one year. Of the remaining providers, 41.2% of the certified providers and only 20% of the uncertified providers had provided day care for two to five years. Approximately 12% of those sampled had provided day care for more than ten years; this represented equal numbers from both groups.

Further analysis of the data revealed two factors which could contribute to longevity in the profession among the certified providers: the provider's age and the provider's participation in training programs. Older providers and those providers who had participated in training programs constituted a larger percentage of the providers who were in day care for longer than two years (Table PR-3a and Figure 1).

Inasmuch as the length of time in day care relates to providers' professionalism, many more certified providers exhibited this characteristic than did uncertified providers.

Another determinant of provider professionalism is training. Although opportunities for provider training have been somewhat limited, several workshops on child related topics have been sponsored by various agencies.

Table PR - 2

HIGHEST LEVEL OF FORMAL EDUCATION COMPLETED

EDUCATION LEVEL	TOTAL NUMBER OF DAY CARE PROVIDERS	LICENSED DAY CARE PROVIDERS	UNLICENSED DAY CARE PROVIDERS
	(%)	(%)	(%)
Less than high school	12.9	11.8	14.0
High school	42.6	39.2	46.0
Some college	32.9	35.3	30.0
Graduate	10.9	11.8	10.0
*Other	1.0	2.0	--
	n = 1-1	n = 51	n = 50

*Others Include:

1. registered nurse
2. real estate license

Table PR - 4

TYPES OF OUT-OF-HOME WORK EXPERIENCE

TYPE OF WORK	LICENSED PROVIDERS	LENGTH OF EMPLOYMENT	UNLICENSED PROVIDERS	LENGTH OF EMPLOYMENT
	(%)	Years	(%)	Years
Child care	54.9	3.88	44.0	4.45
Secretarial	29.4	4.14	30.0	3.50
Food service	21.6	4.00	32.0	3.80
Retail clerk	19.6	6.90	30.0	3.71
Professional	5.9	8.00	12.0	2.83
Education/ teaching	5.9	3.00	8.0	3.25
*Others (please specify)	29.4	5.46	62.0	3.83
	n = 51		n = 50	

*Others include:

1. Nurses' aid
2. Bell-hop
3. Gas station manager
4. Hotel desk clerk
5. Optometrist
6. Telephone operator
7. Small business owner
8. Welding/machinery
9. Bank teller
10. Maid
11. Cashier
12. Computer operator
13. Newspaper mailroom
14. Night manager - fast food
15. Boat factory
16. Factory packing house
17. Travel agent
18. Real estate
19. Beauty shop
20. School bus director
21. Auditor
22. Police department/courthouse
23. Lifeguard

Table PR - 1

LENGTH OF TIME IN DAY CARE

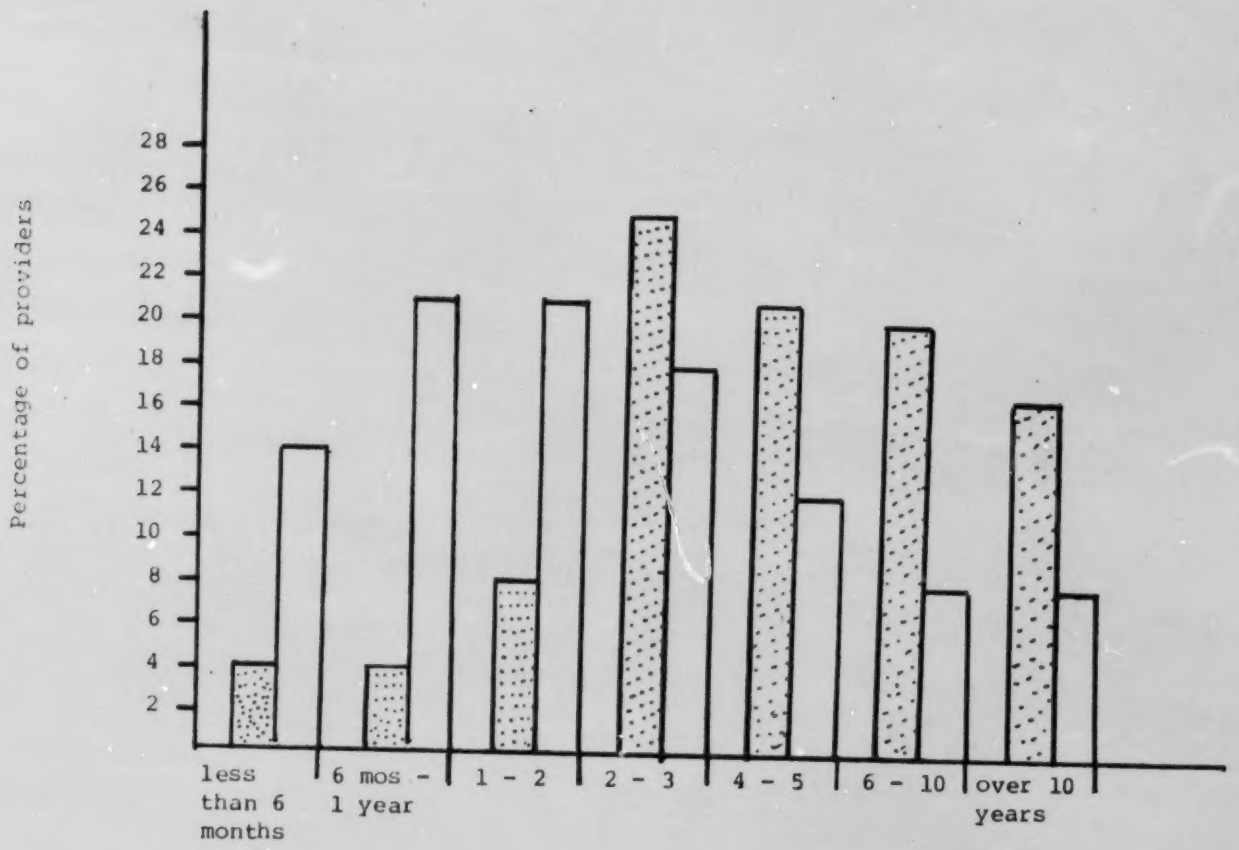
PERIOD	TOTAL NUMBER OF PROVIDERS (%)	LICENSED PROVIDERS (%)	UNLICENSED PROVIDERS (%)
Less than 6 months	15.8	7.8	24.0
6 months - 1 year	19.8	13.7	26.0
1 year - 2 years	11.9	11.8	12.0
2 years - 5 years	30.7	41.2	20.0
6 years - 10 years	9.9	13.7	6.0
10 years and over	11.9	11.8	12.0
	n = 101	n = 51	n = 50

Table PR - 3A

DAY CARE PROVIDERS' AGE

	TOTAL NUMBER OF DAY CARE PROVIDERS	LICENSED DAY CARE PROVIDERS	UNLICENSED DAY CARE PROVIDERS
	Years	Years	Years
Mean	34.52	38.67	30.3
Median	31.44	34.00	28.5
Mode	27.00	31.00	25.0
	n = 101	n = 51	n = 50

PROVIDER TRAINING AND STABILITY IN DAY CARE
(Figure 1)



Please note:
A similar comparison among the uncertified providers could not be made because there were very few providers who had received training.

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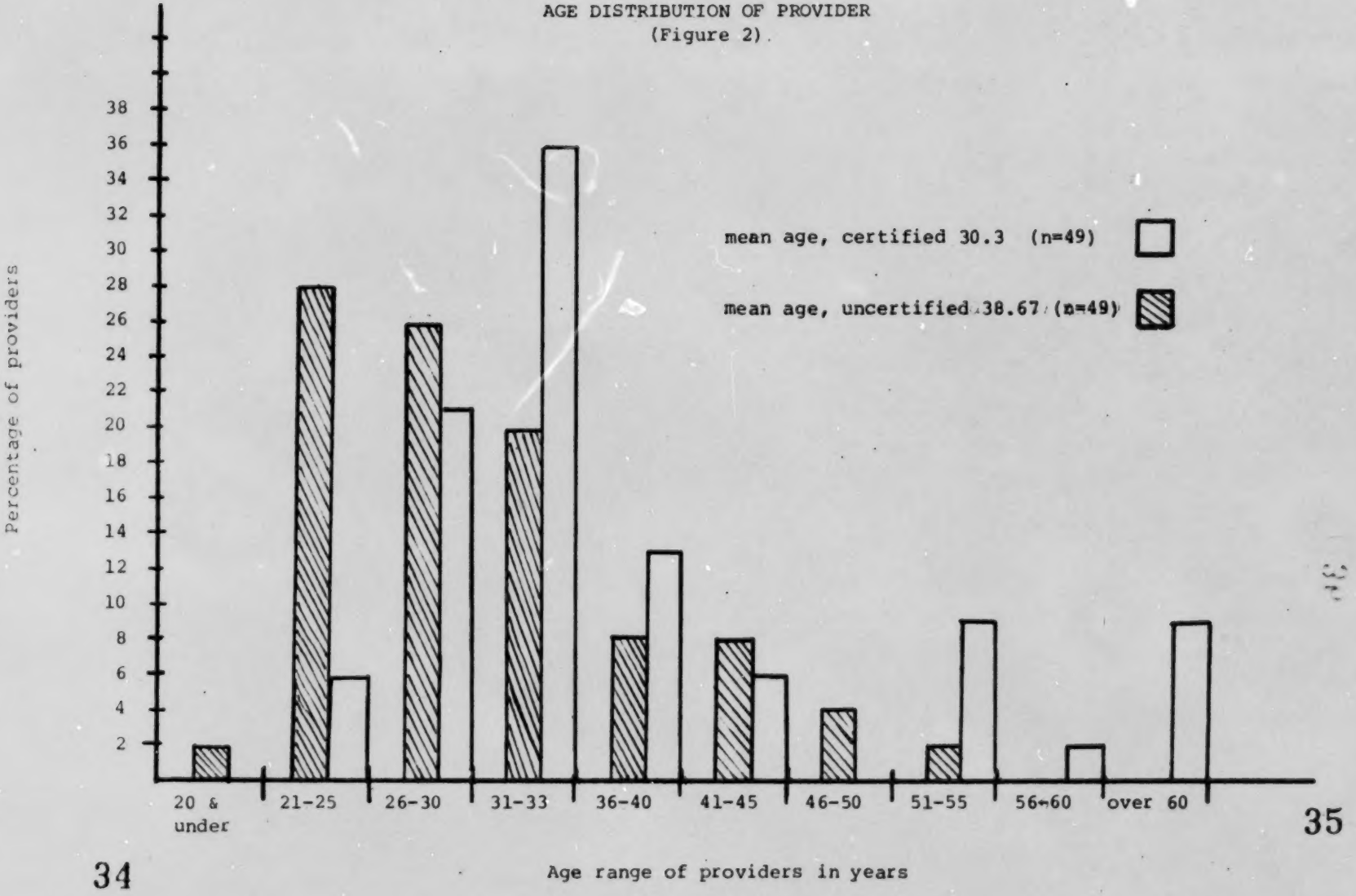
AGE DISTRIBUTION OF PROVIDER
(Figure 2).



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When asked if they had attended workshops, 41.2% of the certified providers responded affirmatively as opposed to only 18% of the uncertified providers.

Further analysis of the data revealed that 75% of the certified providers who did participate in workshops were also participants in the Child Care Food Program. Because the sponsoring agency requires its participants to attend workshops, the larger percentage of certified providers who participated in workshops is probably a result of this requirement.

Yet another indicator of professionalism is the desire to belong to one's own professional organizations and to use community resources to improve one's job performance. Although only 13.7% of the certified providers and none of the uncertified providers actually belonged to the "Child Care Committee," a day care association, 39.2% of the certified and 26% of the uncertified did express a desire to be a part of the day care association. They also indicated a desire for more peer interaction.

Through these contacts with their own colleagues, they might assess their own care more objectively, thus improving their programs. Their lack of participation in day care associations could be partially attributed to their long hours of work, resulting in fatigue which would deter them from going out at night. Other contributing factors could be personal/family commitments, isolation and failure to view day care as a profession.

As part of the study, a toy lending library was set up for the use of both certified and uncertified providers. Some flexibility in operating hours was provided by having the Resource Center open on Saturdays, and the toys could be checked out in the evenings when the workshops were held. A total of 44 certified providers and six uncertified providers checked out toys. The six uncertified providers have since become certified.

Another aspect of professionalism is the emphasis placed on day care operation as a service-oriented business. Only a small percentage of providers, 23.5% of the certified and 10% of the uncertified, had any written contracts with their clientele. Use of a trial period to determine whether the services rendered were satisfactory to the parents, also was not a part of general day care arrangements among the majority of the providers (Table PR-14). In addition, 62% of the uncertified providers did not have substitutes available to them.

Further, a large number of providers from both groups did not have written parental consent for taking children on field trips or administering medication. Perhaps because they did not view their operation as a business they neglected to address those issues which would protect not only the children, but themselves as well.

Table PR - 14

SELECTION PROCESS EMPLOYED FOR CHILDREN'S ENROLLMENT

SELECTION PROCESS	TOTAL NUMBER OF PROVIDERS (%)	LICENSED PROVIDERS (%)	UNLICENSED PROVIDERS (%)
Interview with parents	89.1	96.1	82.0
Interview with children	86.1	88.2	84.0
Trial/probationary period	22.8	19.6	26.0
Written contract	16.8	23.5	10.0
Via telephone	7.9	3.9	12.0
*Other	5.9	5.9	6.0
	n = 101	n = 51	n = 50

*Others include:

1. child - well behaved
2. age of child
3. make sure they get along with own children
4. spend some time with children's mother here
5. let parents inspect the facility

Profile of the Parent

Below is a description of a typical consumer of day care in the Casper area. The description is based upon statistically significant data gathered from users' surveys.

Mrs. X is a 29-year-old Caucasian, married, with one child attending a family day care. She chooses a family day care provider on the basis of perceived better care/more personal attention, and convenience and proximity to her home. She usually travels one mile to arrive at the day care provider's facility. Her child spends an average of 8.203 hours per day at day care, and the average cost is $8.36 per day or $37.71 based on a weekly rate. Mrs. X is very satisfied with her day care arrangements and bases her selection and evaluation of the day care facilities on the personality and character of the provider, as well as reliability and her child's opportunity for development.

Family versus Center Day Care

The study found that differences in the number of children in day care exist between group/center care and family day care facilities. Family day care seems to be the type of facility in which most parents choose to place their children.

The study shows that when parents are asked why they have chosen a smaller family day care, "sharing common values with the provider" was a statistically significant reason. Convenience and/or proximity to work/home was also found to be statistically significant, as was better care/personal attention. Greater flexibility in hours was found to be another significant reason for choosing the family day care arrangements.

Differences were also found in the distance traveled to reach the day care facility, with consumers of family day care traveling fewer miles than those utilizing group kinds of day care.

The study also indicates that a significant difference exists in the amount of hours per day children spend in day care, with children spending longer amounts of time in the family day cares.

Cost of day care was found to be significantly different between the two types of care. Family day care is less expensive by day. Differences were also found when weekly rates were analyzed.

Educational/recreational programs and facilities proved to be a significant issue. Parents expressed a desire to enroll their children in programs with an educational component.

The Day Care Users' View of Day Care Regulations and Quality

Asked if they were aware of regulations governing licensing and certification of day care providers, 88% of the parents answered "yes." Asked if regulations were adequate, 41% responded "yes" while 27% said "no" and 32% indicated a "no answer" or "don't know" response indicating a lack of knowledge on the part of the user.

Users indicated by 42% that they felt regulations do serve the purpose for which they are intended. However, the data indicated that 38.5% of the responses were "no response," which shows that a significant number of users are not knowledgeable about regulations and their purpose. Furthermore, when asked to indicate whether their present provider was licensed/certified, a significant portion of the users either did not know or answered the question inaccurately.

Parents seem to view regulation as being a basis for health and safety issues. However, the study indicates that parents feel responsible for quality in day care beyond the health and safety issues. Parents rank providers as second to parents in responsibility for providing quality in child care.

Users of day care support the notion of local involvement in day care regulation and monitoring. Improving quality, monitoring, filling the gap left by state regulations, assisting the Department of Public Assistance and Social Services and health care were cited as reasons for advocating local support.

Asked how the community can best ensure high quality in day care, 36% of the users gave a "no response" or "don't know" answer, indicating that a significant portion of the consumers of day care are not certain what specific measures are needed to ensure quality. This indicates a need for public awareness and education in the area of quality and its components in the child care environment. The results also indicate that 25% of the user population believes that more inspections can best ensure quality day care.

Review of the information concerning users' opinions of the regulatory facets, the issues of quality and the views toward the role of the provider indicates that day care consumers would advocate and support a cooperative effort between users, regulatory agencies, local government, public awareness groups and providers to attain the common goal of high quality child care.

Role of the Regulatory Agencies

City of Casper

The City of Casper is not now actively involved with either regulating or monitoring family day care. Zoning regulations allow the provision of

family day care services as a permitted use in most residential zones. Although the city zoning codes restrict group day care homes and centers to certain zones with the issuance of a special use permit, the restriction of family day care is non-existent.

Because of home rule, the City of Casper calls for regular fire inspections of group day care homes and centers, but does not require fire inspections of family day care facilities unless there is a complaint.

The City perceives its role as that of enforcing building and zoning codes. The City has also indicated some interest in provider training, resource facilities, and assistance to parents and the Department of Public Assistance and Social Services in a desire to upgrade the quality of day care services. The funding of this study was an attempt to recognize the importance of day care in the community.

The role of the City as perceived by the providers indicates that 40% of the total sample would like the City to be involved with monitoring and regulating day care, followed by 23% who believe the City's main role should be implementing training and awareness programs for day care. Fifty-three percent of the parents would also like the City's involvement in regulation and monitoring to improve the quality of day care.

To the extent quality day care programs will attract families to a given community, availability of superior day care facilities can result in concrete benefits for the City of Casper such as attracting new residents, encouraging a stable population of working parents and enhancing the image of city government as a concerned partner in the community.

It is the recommendation of this study that the City of Casper should leave the monitoring of day care to the Department of Public Assistance and Social Services, continue its fire inspections as needed and address the issue of availability and quality in day care by providing training and support programs such as resource centers.

Department of Public Assistance and Social Services

State Department of Public Assistance and Social Services. The State Department of Public Assistance and Social Services (D-PASS) is currently the certifying authority for all child care facilities in Wyoming. The State D-PASS sets up standards and policies for the administration of day care regulations, and is also responsible for training County D-PASS staff and day care providers.

Based on the data obtained, it is the recommendation of this study that the State D-PASS should continue to be the certifying authority and should review and update standards as needs dictate. It should be responsible for enforcing uniformity in administration of day care regulations throughout the state and should assure adequate funding to the local D-PASS to provide for necessary manpower needed to certify family day care. Further, it is

the responsibility of the State D-PASS to provide training for certification staff.

A statewide training program for certification staff is necessary to assure uniformity in implementation of certification regulations. The problem with current training programs is summarized by one county unit supervisor: "Formal training is minimal. The supervisor attended State D-PASS training for about a two hour session. A State D-PASS consultant is available and visits in the office a couple of times a year. We have virtually trained ourselves in Natrona County by reading materials, familiarizing ourselves with statutes and standards and working closely with (local agencies)."

As the certifying authority, the State D-PASS should also facilitate development and implementation of statewide training programs for day care providers. The State should educate local governments on day care, its needs and the importance of quality, and on what local governments can do to help improve the day care situation in their own community.

County Department of Public Assistance and Social Services. The County Department of Public Assistance and Social Services (D-PASS) is the branch of the State D-PASS responsible for identifying and monitoring family day care. The County D-PASS provides information concerning certification, processes family day care applications, investigates child abuse or neglect complaints and visits a percentage of providers. The County D-PASS is not the certifying authority.

The County D-PASS should have an adequate number of trained staff (one full-time staff per 100 providers), to serve not only as regulators of day care but also as counselors to help providers comply with regulations. The County D-PASS, with adequate funding from the State, should implement a true certification program, with inspections rather than registration. The agency should continue to provide information on certification, process family day care applications and investigate child abuse or neglect complaints. The County D-PASS should also identify services, and ferret out those providers who are marginal or submarginal. After giving them adequate time and assistance to comply, the County D-PASS should prosecute those providers who fail to make the necessary improvements. The County D-PASS should have the power to close those facilities which fail to comply.

The County D-PASS should also continue working with the local providers and community groups to facilitate the development of day care associations, parent groups and the "Stamp of Approval Program." Day care referrals and community education on certification should also be the responsibility of the local D-PASS. An ongoing media campaign to inform the community of the statutory requirements and make the public aware that it is illegal to operate a day care without a certificate should be a part of their community education program.

Children in Family Day Care

Most debate on day care results from a concern with the most valuable resource of this nation, the children. A majority of the children of working mothers receiving out-of-home care are being cared for in family day care homes. Some 2100 children attend family day care homes in Casper. An average of 5.04 children stay in each certified day care facility and a significanlty lower number, 3.52, stay in each uncertified day care home, including providers' own children (for distribution of the number of children per home see Figure 2). The ages of these children range from 0 to school-age (Table PR-7).

A large number of children under two years of age are in family day care, constituting 33% of the enrollment of the certified facilities and 43% of the enrollment of the uncertified facilities. The larger proportion of infants in the uncertified facilities can be attributed to the fact that state regulations restrict the number of infants a given day care home can care for. Thus, the increasing need for infant care is met by the uncertified homes.

The average age of children is 3.78 years in certified facilities and 3.07 years in uncertified homes. On the average, children in certified facilities stay significantly longer. They have been in certified facilities for 8.82 months and in uncertified facilities for 5.96 months. The children in day care spend a significant portion of their waking time in day care, 7.8 hours in both certified and uncertified facilities. They have an informal relationship with their providers, as is evidenced by a majority of them addressing the provider by her/his first name (Table PR-8).

The data obtained on the ages and enrollment of children was further analyzed to evaluate the group composition and age range within a facility. Research indicates that a day care program with small groups,

> "with an age range of about two years offers more positive, cooperative, complex and sustained interactions with both other children and the caregiver and has benefits for social development."[2]

The data indicates that 39% of the certified and 45% of the uncertified facilities had an enrollment of children with two or fewer years of age fange (Figure 4). Research shows that the providers themselves show preference for less variation in the age of the children they care for, stating it is easier to manage a limited number of children within a similar age group. Further, those providers who have their own children at home desire playmates of an appropriate age for them. Because a larger portion of uncertified providers have their own children at home, they "take-in" children as playmates for their own.[1] As a result, a larger portion of the uncertified providers have an enrollment with an age variation of two of fewer years. Over all, not much difference in group composition was observed among the certified and uncertified providers.

Since research indicates that group composition and age range play an important role in the social development of children, it is recommended

Table PR - 7

ENROLLMENT INFORMATION OF THE DAY CARE CHILD

	LICENSED PROVIDERS	UNLICENSED PROVIDERS
Number of children in day care (counting provider's own children)	5.04	3.52
Number of children in day care (without provider's own children)	4.63	2.66
Age:		
under 2 years	33.0%	43.0%
2 - 5 years	47.0%	40.0%
6 years and over	20.0%	17.0%
average age	3.78 years	3.07 years
Length of stay in day care	8.82 months	5.96 months
	n = 51	n = 50

Table PR - 8

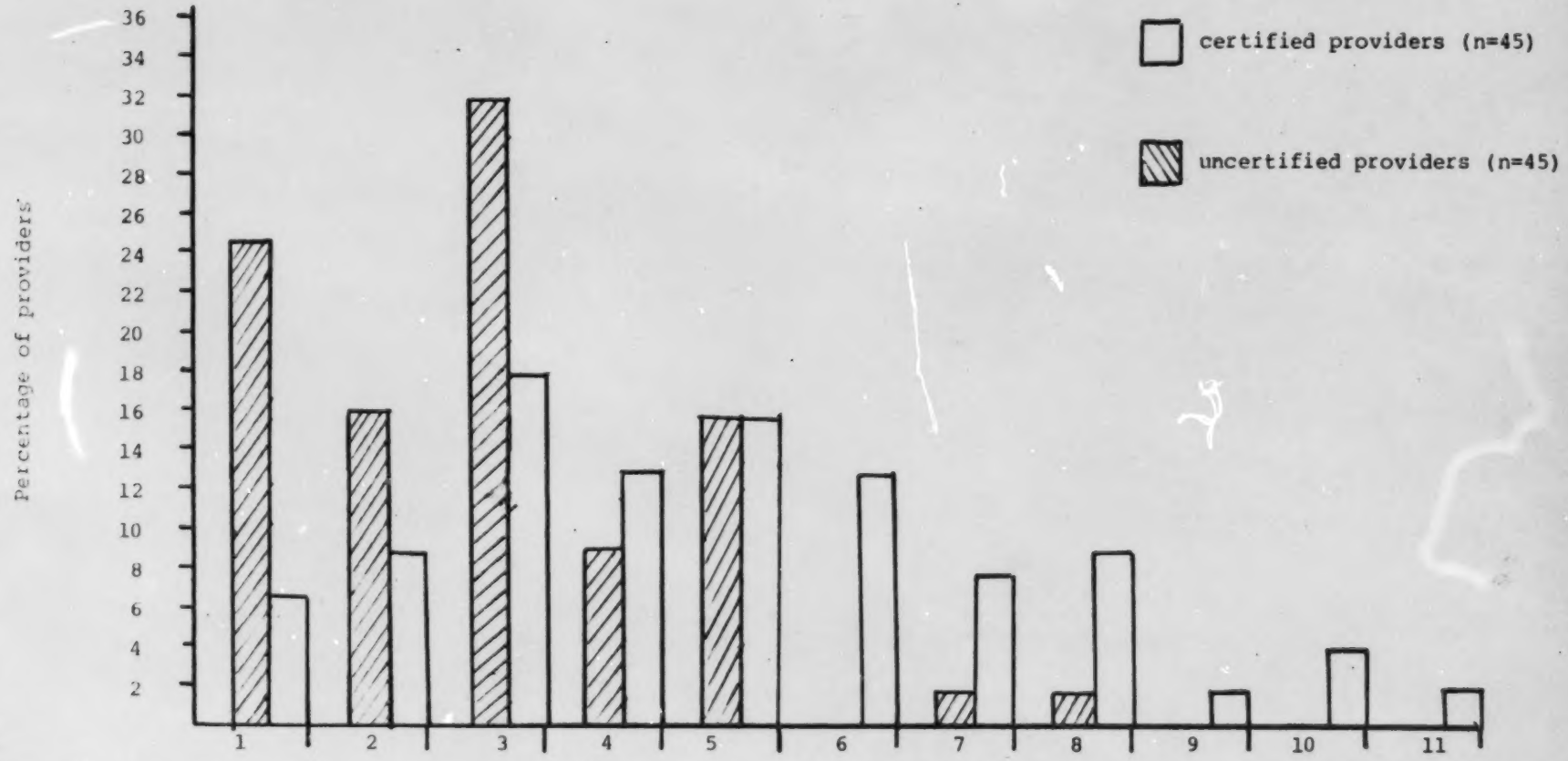
CHILDREN'S TITLE FOR THE PROVIDER

TITLE	TOTAL NUMBER OF PROVIDERS	LICENSED PROVIDERS	UNLICENSED PROVIDERS
	(%)	(%)	(%)
First name	84.2	82.4	86.0
Generic name	25.7	29.4	22.0
Mrs., etc.	3.0	5.9	--
Last name	1.0	2.0	--
Other*	2.0	2.0	2.0
	n = 101	n = 51	n = 50

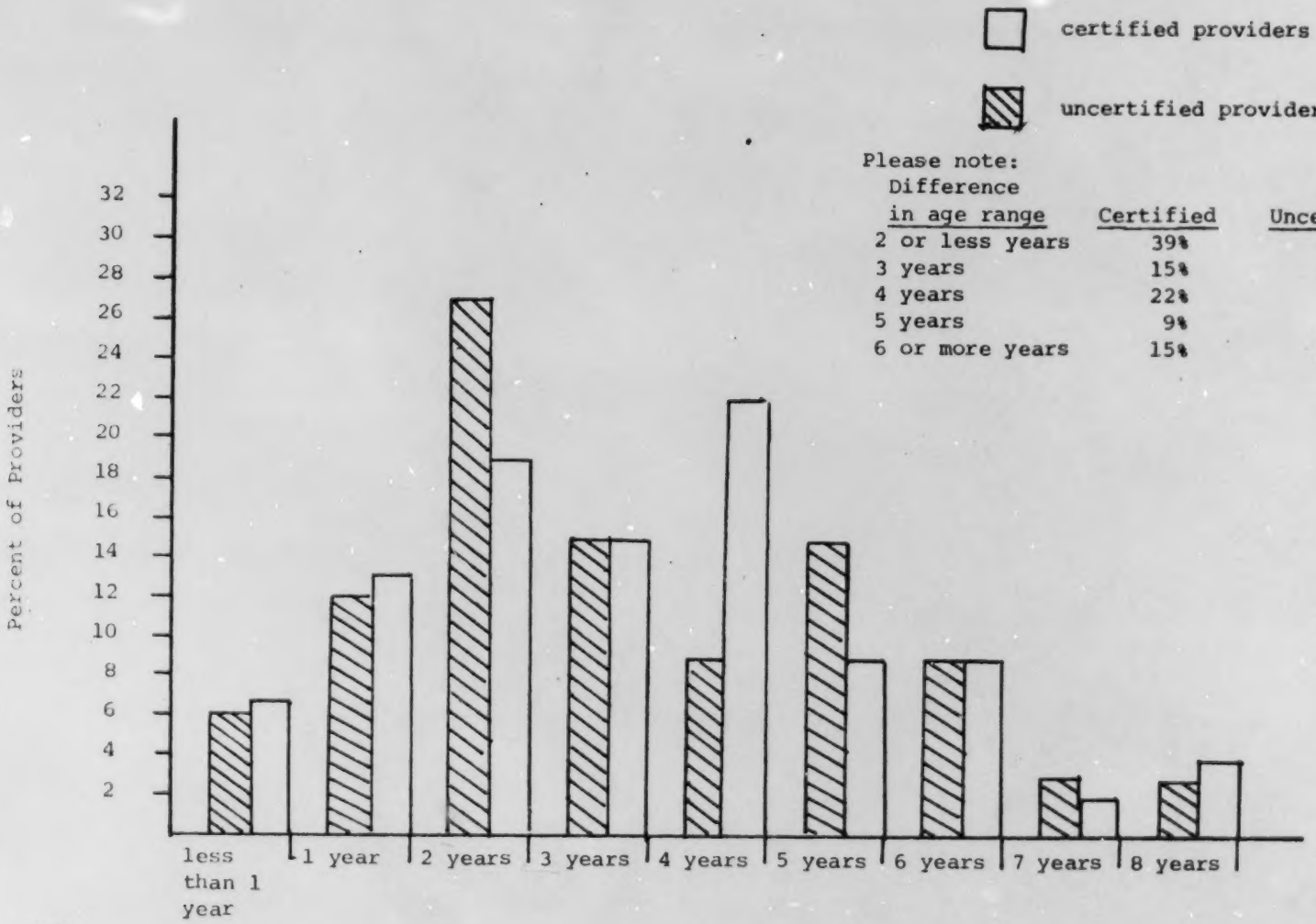
*Other includes:

1. didn't call me anything, "hey _____"

DISTRIBUTION OF CHILDREN IN FAMILY DAY CARE FACILITIES
(Figure 3)



DIFFERENCE IN AGES OF ENROLLED CHILDREN
(Figure 4)



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that Wyoming family day care regulations address this issue.

Regulatory Compliance in Facility Size

Before and during the study, interviewers frequently heard stories about uncertified day care providers taking care of ten or more children and leaving them unattended. One certified provider reported during the interview that "there was a woman in back of my house who was taking 12 children ... she's quit now and is no longer doing day care."

There was an initial concern about the number of children present in certified as well as uncertified day care facilities at any given time. This concern was heightened by the fact that family day care homes in Wyoming are registered without inspection for regulatory compliance. According to state day care regulations, a family day care home may have up to six children, including those of the provider. A total of 71% of the certified and 96% of the uncertified family day care homes in the Casper study were in compliance compared to 73% of certified and 79% of uncertified in the National Family Day Care Study. The national study concluded that providers tend to conform to day care standards as specified by the states, a conclusion that is upheld by the findings of the Casper study. However, the study found situations where the providers exceeded their allowable capacity for family day care, including one uncertified provider who had 11 children in her care. This provider was one of the seven providers who had refused to participate in the study.

ELEMENTS OF FAMILY DAY CARE

Regulations

A significant number of family day cares choose to remain unlicensed. The National Family Day Care Study reports that "family day care in the United States overwhelmingly consists of informal, unregulated arrangements, which account for about 94% of all family day care."[1] The local study indicated that 82% of the family day care providers in Casper are uncertified. These providers care for some 1600 children. At the time of the study, 99 certified family day care providers were located in Casper, registered through the local Department of Public Assistance and Social Services. Approximately one-third of them either were not providing care or were not reached. An approximately equal number had applied for certification during the period, bringing the total back to 99. Based on the recruitment method and the data obtained from the State Department of Public Assistance and Social Services, it is projected that the number of unlicensed family day care facilities in Casper is approximately 450.

Before one even attempts to answer the question of how one can encourage these providers to become certified, let us look briefly at the purpose, the problems, the regulatory process and what the regulations guarantee.

Purpose

The purpose of regulations for family day care providers as stated by the local Department of Public Assistance and Social Services is to ensure the safety of the children, to identify providers and to make them aware of minimum requirements.

What do the regulations guarantee? According to the regulators responsible for certification, the regulations guarantee visibility, commitment to safety, that the certificate holder is registered and that the facility was in compliance at the time of certification. Although children's safety is listed as a purpose of the regulations, this safety is not guaranteed.

The parents' interpretation of the purpose of the regulations as indicated by the study is to ensure the health and safety of the child, quality control, and the protection of the provider. When parents see a certificate hanging on the wall, they interpret it as an indication that the facility is a safe and healthy place for children - instead of merely a gaurantee of visibility, commitment to safety and that the facility was in compliance at the time of registration. This is an obvious problem caused by lack of parental knowledge about regulations.

Problems Associated with Family Day Care Regulations

As indicated in the previous section, parents have limited knowledge of family day care regulations. This is further substantiated by the fact that when parents were asked to comment on whether existing regulations are adequate, or serve the purpose for which they were intended, almost one-third of the parents (32% for the first question, 37.5% for the second question) did not respond. However, their failure to respond to these questions could also be interpreted as parental apathy toward regulations. Reasons given by those parents who felt day care regulations are inadequate and do not serve the purpose included the following:

1. day care regulations need to be more stringent and more specific;
2. regulations need to be enforced; and
3. appropriate penalties should exist for noncompliance.

The uncertified family day care providers themselves had limited knowledge of existing day care regulations (Tables PR-19 and PR-20). Another problem associated with the seemingly large number of uncertified facilities is that perhaps they do not see certification as worthwhile. Asked if certification is worthwhile, 36% of the unlicensed providers either responded negatively or indicated that they were not sure. Reasons given for negative answers included:

1. the authorities should investigate/lack of inspections;
2. the parents continue to use day care anyway;
3. parental decision; and
4. certification requires a lot of paperwork and they see no value in it.

PROVIDER'S KNOWLEDGE OF EXISTING DAY CARE REGULATIONS

Table PR - 18

QUESTION: Are existing day care regulations complicated and expensive?

	TOTAL NUMBER OF PROVIDERS	LICENSED PROVIDERS	UNLICENSED PROVIDERS
	(%)	(%)	(%)
No	70.0	88.0	50.0
Yes	5.0	5.0	6.0
Don't know	26.0	8.0	44.0
	n = 101	n = 51	n = 50

Table PR - 19

Question: Do existing day care regulations require that any person caring for more than two unrelated children register as a day care provider?

	TOTAL NUMBER OF PROVIDER	LICENSED PROVIDERS	UNLICENSED PROVIDERS
	(%)	(%)	(%)
Correct answers	53.0	71.0	34.0
Incorrect answers	28.0	20.0	36.0
Don't know	20.0	9.0	30.0
	n = 101	n = 51	n = 50

Table PR - 20

QUESTION: Which of the following are a part of the state requirements for family day care providers?

	CORRECT RESPONSE		
CATEGORIES	TOTAL NUMBER OF PROVIDERS	LICENSED PROVIDERS	UNLICENSED PROVIDERS
	(%)	(%)	(%)
a. Three character references	78.2	88.2	68.0
b. $50 registration fee	78.2	93.3	64.0
c. Fire and health inspection for family day care	45.5	58.8	28.0
d. Liability insurance	45.5	56.9	34.0
	n = 101	n = 51	n = 50

"Providers do not see the value" was also the response given by the regulatory agencies when asked about problems with the regulations. Other problems faced by the regulators are lack of monitoring, lack of uniformity in enforcement, and variance of priority accompanied by difficulty in enforcement due to staff/dollar limitations (Table RG-13).

Registration Process

In Wyoming, registration of family day care (six and fewer children) is a provider self-evaluation process. The family day care applicant submits a completed application which includes a guideline checklist and evidence of a negative TB test, and furnishes names for references which should be returned as positive. The records are checked for any previous child abuse or neglect cases against the provider. If the provider has not been charged with child abuse or committed a felony, a certificate is issued allowing her to care for as many as six children in her home. All of this is accomplished without a site visit or any training in basic child care skills. The regulatory agency (county Department of Public Assistance and Social Services) is required to monitor only 12% of its family day care homes, and in some counties this requirement is not enforced.

Non-compliance

Certified providers. If a complaint is filed against the provider, an investigation is instigated, based on the information furnished or observed. The investigation focuses on health, safety and the number of children in the facility. An inter-agency coordination exists in non-compliance cases, and copies of health and fire inspections are used. If need be, a child protection investigation is also carried out.

The local Department of Public Assistance and Social Services may close a facility, but if the provider wishes to appeal, the process is outlined in the Administrative Procedure Act and the provider may go to the certification board.

The penalties for non-compliance include revokation and/or denial of a license; fines from $50 to $200/day and court actions. It is the responsibility of the County Attorney to enforce the fine. Officials of the State Department of Public Assistance and Social Services feel that the fines are too high.

A general consensus exists among state and local officials that those certified providers who have been found in non-compliance should have their certificates revoked and should be fined, but should first be given the opportunity to comply. This can be achieved by giving them some time to comply, providing assistance and training, and stressing the positive aspects of compliance, such as recognition of those providers who are excelling.

Uncertified providers. The primary question is, "how can uncertified providers be brought into regulatory compliance?"

Table RG - 13

QUESTION: What are some of the problems with the present regulations?

SOURCE	RESPONSE
City Manager	- providers do not see the value - parents do not know what to do
City Mayor	- lack of uniformity - lack of enforcement
State D-PASS	- lack of monitoring - lack of uniformity in enforcement - variance of priority
County D-PASS	- difficulty in enforcement due to staff/dollar limitations - registration is totally controlled by the applicant - not written in a consumer format

When uncertified providers were asked why they chose to remain uncertified, 32% replied that they did not have enough children, 16% responded that they were in the process of applying and 12% claimed ignorance of the law. Reasons given by 36% could be interpreted as a disregard for the law, including answers such as "not state's business" or "not had time." Asked what types of incentive programs might encourage them to become certified, 46% of the providers opted not to respond.

Their response, or lack of response, indicates that the providers have limited knowledge of the regulations and see little or no value in them. The replies further indicate that, because of the informal nature of their day care arrangements, they believe the regulations do not apply to them. This attitude was succinctly stated by the provider who responded that "regulations are needed if you have large numbers of children, but I have only a few."

The problem is further compounded by miscommunication and by frequently incorrect perceptions about regulations on the part of the providers. A case in point is that of one Casper provider who had offered home day care for three years before applying for a license. Upon application, she said she was informed by D-PASS officials that she would have to operate as a family day care for a few months before she could qualify as a group day care home. Because that would have required her to give up two of the children she cares for, all of whom had been in her care for more than a year, she was considering remaining unlicensed. A check with local D-PASS officials indicated that the situation resulted from a misunderstanding - thus pointing up the need for clear channels of communication between regulatory agencies and providers.

Should family day care be regulated?

With a significant number of providers throughout the nation remaining uncertified, and with many parents not using licensing as a criterion in making day care arrangements (Table PA-17), the question arises "do we need family day care regulations?"

Because of a legal tradition which has protected the privacy of the home and family, it has been difficult to legislate standards to be carried out within individual homes. However, one must begin to look at family day care as a profession which requires high standards.

Some of the problems associated with family day care as cited by the regulatory agencies, include potential for abuse because of isolation, lack of knowledge in child development on the providers' part, and uncertain safety and health standards for children.

Parents themselves do not have the expertise necessary to assess whether the facility is safe for their child, nor do they use safety as a criterion for selecting their day care (Figure 5). They either assume that the children are in a safe environment, which may not necessarily be the case, or don't feel comfortable in imposing their needs and desires in someone else's home. Whatever the case may be, it has the potential for grave consequences. Further, the fact that the certification process does indeed increase provider awareness of aspects such as physical setting and nutritional need (as demonstrated by the Casper study), shows certification certainly has some positive benefits.

Table PA - 17

QUESTION: What features do you look for or are you most concerned about in selecting and evaluating a day care provider for your children?

(Multiple answers)

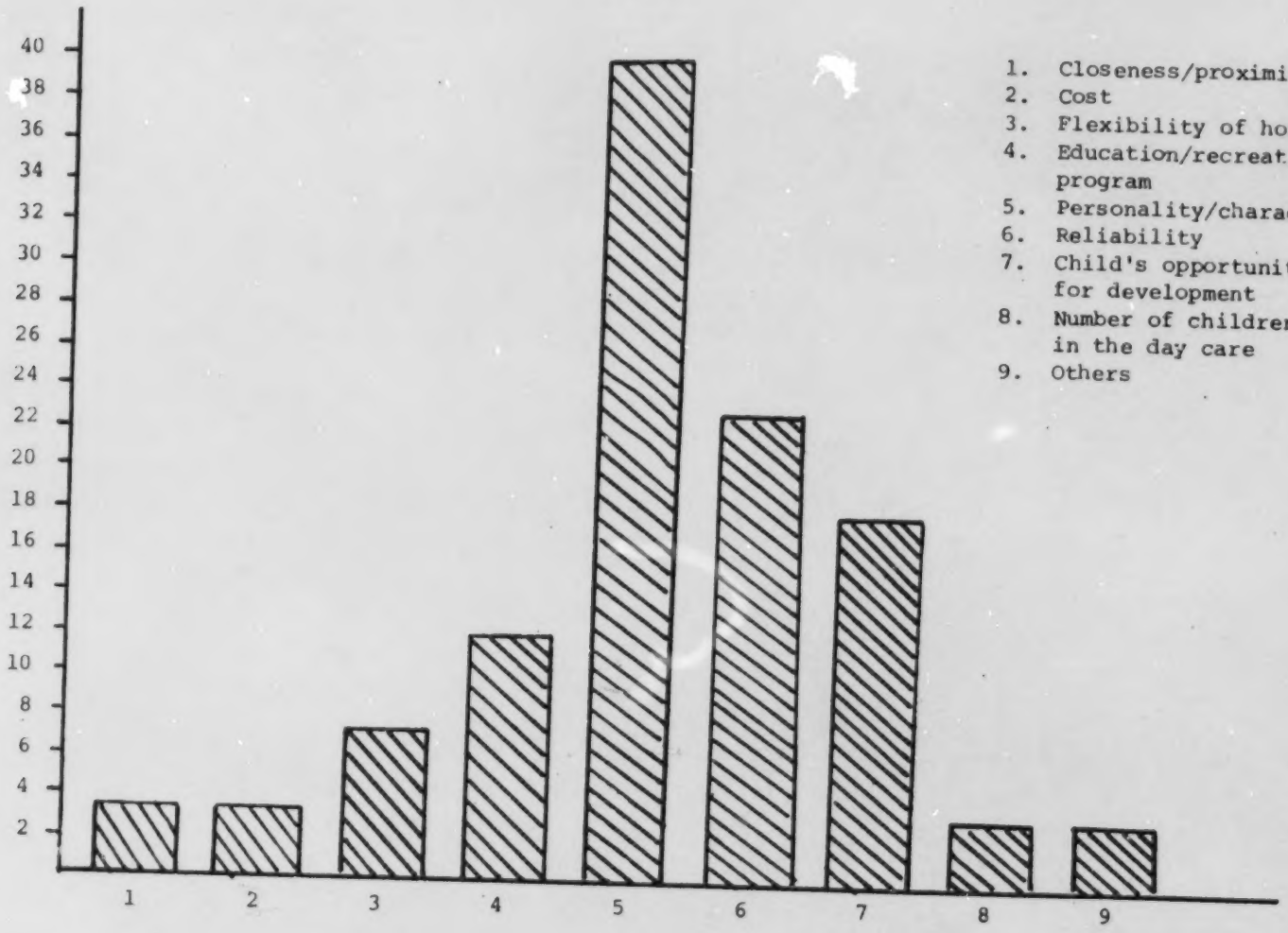
FEATURES	% OF PARENTS
Personality/character of provider	40.0%
Reliability	23.0%
Child's opportunity for development	18.0%
Education/recreational programs	12.0%
Cost	7.5%
Convenience/proximity	3.5%
Flexibility of hours	3.5%
*Other	3.5%
Number of children in the day care	3.5%

n = 200

*Others include:

1. no smoking
2. love and attention
3. personal attention
4. values taught

WHAT FEATURES DID YOU LOOK FOR WHEN SELECTING AND EVALUATING DAY CARE FOR YOUR CHILDREN?
(Figure 5)



1. Closeness/proximity - 3.5%
2. Cost - 7.5%
3. Flexibility of hours - 3.5%
4. Education/recreation program - 12.0%
5. Personality/character- 40.0%
6. Reliability - 23.0%
7. Child's opportunity for development - 18.0%
8. Number of children in the day care - 3.5%
9. Others - 3.5%

56

57

For the protection of the children, the answer to the question "should family day care be regulated?" is "yes." Minimum standards should be established and reviewed regularly. Family providers should be certified rather than registered, and should be subject to inspections by fire and health departments and Department of Public Assistance and Social Service officals. Certification should be based on a two-tier system, Day Care I and Day Care II. Certification of Day Care I should be based on minimum safety requirements below which no facilities should operate. Day Care II certification should address issues concerning quality, such as program and curriculum, provider competence and training.

Because lack of funding puts constraints on inspection, the legislature should appropriate funds for the protection of children. As one child development specialist aptly stated, "children and their families have a right not to experience harmful conditions in early childhood programs, and the right to expect that children's developmental needs will be met."[3]

The recommendations to bring unregistered providers into regulatory compliance center on six main issues:

1. ignorance of the law;
2. disregard for the law;
3. lack of perceived value for regulations;
4. lack of benefits;
5. lack of enforcement due to weak laws and limited manpower for monitoring; and
6. lack of public knowledge on day care regulations and their significance.

The providers and the community should be informed of the day care statutes through a statewide media campaign. It must be brought to their attention that if anyone cares for more than two unrelated children in her home, she must be certified. This statewide campaign should be ongoing and sponsored by the State Department of Public Assistance and Social Services.

The County Department of Public Assistance and Social Services should be responsible for monitoring newspaper and bulletin board advertisements for day care. (Please note that current day care law does not require the Department of Public Assistance and Social Services to actively search for uncertified facilities.) Once the uncertified facilities have been identified, the providers should be informed of the regulations and shown the benefits of compliance such as the Child Care Food Program reimbursement, toy loan library, referral service, professionalism in day care and provider recognition programs. Providers should be given adequate time to comply, but those who fail to comply should be prosecuted.

Those providers who were identified by the efforts of this study, and are still providing day care, should be encouraged to be certified. The agency responsible for conducting this study had earlier obtained a waiver from the State releasing it from obligation to report the names of uncertified providers unless a potential for child abuse or neglect existed.

Therefore, it is recommended that the agency in possession of the names of the uncertified providers should develop a handout showing the benefits of being licensed and encouraging the providers to operate within the regulatory compliance. This brochure could also be used by the regulatory agencies to inform potential providers and consumers of day care.

Quality

What is quality, why is it important and how does one ensure quality in family day care?

Quality in family day care frequently incorporates such words and phrases as "loving and nurturing," "stimulating environment/trained staff," "nutritious meals," and perhaps "something extra."

In an attempt to ensure quality, the Federal Inter-Agency Day Care Requirements (FIDCR) had recommended a set of minimum standards for quality care. These included a planned daily program addressing the four areas of growth and development, trained providers, and adequate and nutritious meals. According to research, other elements of quality include an environment that offers a wide variety of materials, including puzzles and books, and a provider who is actively talking, teaching and playing with the children and providing materials, considers herself as a professional, has been trained in child development and has five to ten years experience.[2]

Research indicates that the first five years of a child's life are those of most rapid mental and physical growth. Appropriate environment can help children grow normally, intellectually and physically, while neglect can have deleterious effects. Thus, the importance of quality in day care is obvious.

With these criteria in mind, the study evaluated environment, day-to-day interaction, and provision of quality care in Casper's family day care homes. The results of the study indicated that family day care has the potential to provide a rich environment. Since there are identifiable elements in day care which influence quality, and since the Casper study results indicate that both groups of family day care providers could use assistance in improving their care, it is recommended that both regulatory and non-regulatory methods be employed to improve quality, including certification and development of day care as a career.

Turnover

One criterion for quality in day care is the length of time a provider has been in day care. The Casper study indicates a turnover rate of 9.72% among certified providers and 62% among uncertified. This higher than normally reported turnover rate among uncertified providers could be a result of the economic conditions of the city. Many of those interviewed indicated that their husbands were out of jobs or that they had prospects for better employment in other states. Further, the follow-up to see if day care was still provided was conducted in summer months; many providers reported they were no longer offering day care, although they may have interrupted their services only for summer months. One may ask why the same factors had less effect on the turnover rate among certified providers. The answer is that certified providers care for more children, and rely on their day care revenues as a major source of income. Therefore, they are less apt to close their facility for the whole summer. Also, because of the stability of their income, the family of the certified provider is more likely to stay in the community and let the spouse look for other employment opportunities within the community.

Research indicates that stability and consistency of care are conducive to a child's normal growth and development. The high turnover rate as it applies to quality is of alarming concern. The main reasons given by the providers for their high turnover included stress, economics, difficulty with parents and children, isolation, changing personal family situation and other employment opportunities (Table PR-6).

It is projected that the increased demand for infant and toddler care will be absorbed by family day care homes, and because a larger number of toddlers and infants are cared for in uncertified facilities, the high turnover of uncertified facilities becomes an area of even greater concern. Psychoanalysts have demonstrated that it is essential to healthy emotional development for an infant to have a close and continuing relationship with one caring adult during the first several years of life.[2] One wonders what the after effects will be on infants who have been cared for by many day care providers, each with different child rearing methods.[2]

Providers who do not view their jobs as stable are also less likely to invest in the purchase of toys and equipment to provide for a physical setting conducive to the normal growth of children. Thus, an environment which is unstable also has the potential to offer poor quality care.

Physical Setting

Research indicates that in a day care setting, the quality of the physical space affects the adults' behavior as well as that of the children.[2] A day care environment which provides an abundance of equipment,

Table PR - 6

REASONS FOR TURNOVER AMONG DAY CARE PROVIDERS

REASONS	LICENSED PROVIDERS (%)	UNLICENSED PROVIDERS (%)
Stress	28.0	24.0
Economics	22.0	24.0
Difficulty with parents	13.0	10.0
Isolation	9.0	6.0
Difficulty with children	8.0	7.0
Changing personal family situation	7.0	5.0
Difficulty collecting money	4.0	5.0
Long hours	3.0	3.0
Other employment opportunities	2.0	6.0
Moving/relocation	1.0	2.0
Day care was unprofitable	1.0	7.0
*Other	2.0	3.0
	n = 51	n = 50

*Others include:

1. transfers out of town
2. don't like changing diapers
3. a lot of work
4. kids are very demanding
5. tired of watching children
6. have to feel real love for children
7. starting own family
8. didn't want to be a day care provider to begin with
9. can't get children
10. frustrating

easily accessible to children and with plenty of choices, has positive effects on the behavior of the children and the interaction and sensitivity of the provider.[2]

Further, family day care facilities possess the potential for abundant opportunity for children to experience real-life situations and to comprehend the adult world through play with these toys and equipment. Providers varied widely within each group as far as availability of supplies and equipment.

Interviewers' comments for a given facility included: "I could see few toys. Children were getting into other things such as candles, pots and pans." Another interviewer saw no evidence of toys or equipment at yet another facility and recorded that the "provider said that the children brought their own toys. She had some earlier, but they got broken. Children entertained themselves mostly."

Overall, the Casper study indicates that certified providers are more apt to emphasize the physical setting than are uncertified providers. Fewer uncertified providers had fine motor toys, large muscle toys and equipment, puzzles, and child-size tables and chairs. Story time and songs and music were provided by 71% and 75% respectively of the certified providers, as opposed to 58% and 64% of the uncertified providers (Table PR-45). One cannot hastily conclude that quality of physical setting is superior in certified than uncertified providers. However, research does indicate that when a setting does not provide for certain kinds of activities and behavior, such actions are not likely to occur unless the adults involved are highly motivated and exceptionally skilled.[2]

That more emphasis is placed on the physical environment by the certified providers could be best expressed by a quote from a case worker at the county Department of Public Assistance and Social Services: "Emphasis on the physical environment is the message we (the regulators) are giving to the providers."

Day-to-Day Interactions

The interaction a child has with the adults providing day care is very influential in determining the child's attitudes, aspirations and intellectual development.[4]

To assess the activities provided in day care facilities, the Casper study obtained two types of data. First, providers were asked to identify the types of activities they provided for their children (Tables PR-34,35,36). Second, interviewers recorded observations of the provider-child interaction and the activities which kept the children busy during the interview. Further, an in-depth analysis of the environment was conducted on 15 certified and 14 uncertified facilities.

In order to obtain a more complete picture of the day care home, interviewers asked the provider to indicate the amount of time she spent on various

Table PR - 45

PROVISIONS FOR ENVIRONMENTAL ELEMENTS IN DAY CARE

PROVISIONS	TOTAL NUMBER OF PROVIDERS (%)	LICENSED PROVIDERS (%)	UNLICENSED PROVIDERS (%)
Bathrooms	99.0	100.0	98.0
Place for your & other adults' belongings	98.0	100.0	96.0
Toys	98.0	98.0	98.0
Quiet toys	97.0	98.0	96.0
Toy storage	96.0	98.0	94.0
Books	95.0	98.0	92.0
Sleeping area	95.0	92.0	98.0
Quiet/sleep time	93.0	96.0	90.0
Age appropriate equipment & toys	93.0	98.0	88.0
Play area	91.1	94.0	88.0
Place for children's belongings	90.1	96.0	84.0
Safe eating utensils	90.0	94.0	86.0
Fine motor toys	86.1	96.0	74.0
Large muscle toys & equipment	85.1	96.0	74.0
Fenced/safe play area	83.0	92.0	74.0
Cribs, high chairs	83.0	84.0	82.0
Separate beds	77.2	71.0	84.0
Puzzles	77.0	80.0	74.0
Child size eating utensils	77.0	82.0	72.0
Songs & music	69.0	75.0	64.0
Trips to the library, park, etc.	65.0	63.0	68.0
Story time	64.0	71.0	58.0
Child size tables & chairs	51.0	59.0	44.0
Playground equipment	50.0	57.0	44.0
Sleeping cots	35.0	43.0	26.0
	n = 101	n = 51	n = 50

Table PR - 34

QUESTION: What activities do you provide the children in your care? (multiple answers)

RESPONSE	TOTAL NUMBER OF PROVIDERS (%)	LICENSED PROVIDERS (%)	UNLICENSED PROVIDERS (%)
General playtime/toys	56.0	56.0	56.0
Reading books/storytime	45.0	54.0	32.0
Coloring	41.0	44.0	38.0
Arts and crafts	33.0	32.0	34.0
Outdoor play	31.0	30.0	32.0
Musical activities (singing and dancing)	24.0	22.0	26.0
Field trips	23.0	30.0	16.0
Writing name/learn ABC's	19.0	20.0	18.0
Group games (hide n' seek, etc)	18.0	20.0	16.0
"help" with baking, gardening, household chores	11.0	16.0	6.0
Excercise (calisthenics)	9.0	12.0	6.0
Swimming	8.0	10.0	6.0
Watch TV	6.0	10.0	2.0
Teaches recognition of animals and shapes	5.0	10.0	--
Go for walks	4.0	4.0	--
Rollerskate/ice skate	2.0	4.0	--
Visit bookmobile/library	2.0	2.0	2.0
Go to movies	2.0	4.0	--
Teach manners	2.0	4.0	--
Bowling	1.0	2.0	--
Birthday parties	1.0	2.0	--
Write letters to grandparents	1.0	--	2.0
Teach how to dress themselves	1.0	--	2.0
Teach safety on the streets	1.0	--	2.0
Learn on their own	1.0	--	2.0
	n = 100	n = 50	n = 50

Table PR - 35

QUESTION: What are some things that your 2 and 3 year olds do?

RESPONSE	TOTAL NUMBER OF PROVIDERS (%)	LICENSED PROVIDERS (%)	UNLICENSED PROVIDERS (%)
Scribble/color	24.0	34.0	14.0
Look at books/be read to	17.0	22.0	12.0
Exploring/inquisitive	17.0	12.0	22.0
Fight with each other	17.0	8.0	26.0
Learning to share	11.0	18.0	4.0
Outside play	9.0	8.0	10.0
Imitate older children	9.0	6.0	12.0
Play by themself	8.0	14.0	2.0
Puzzles	7.0	10.0	4.0
Beginning to talk	6.0	12.0	--
Short attention span	5.0	10.0	2.0
Building blocks	5.0	2.0	8.0
Riding toys	4.0	4.0	4.0
Use of hands	4.0	8.0	--
Talk to each other	4.0	--	8.0
Listen to music	4.0	6.0	2.0
Try to be independent, still dependent	4.0	--	8.0
Singing	3.0	4.0	2.0
Push-pull toys	3.0	4.0	2.0
Matching (shapes, colors, etc.)	3.0	4.0	2.0
Play ball	3.0	6.0	--
Enjoy praise/attention	3.0	6.0	--
Cuddle in lap/stay near provider	3.0	6.0	--
Put things in and out of a container	2.0	--	4.0
Water plants/fish	2.0	2.0	--
Work on concepts	1.0	2.0	--
Play with dirt	1.0	2.0	--
Emotional	1.0	2.0	--
Play in water	1.0	2.0	--
Plays more purposely with toys	1.0	--	2.0
Make a selection/guess/choices	1.0	2.0	--
Potty training	1.0	--	2.0
	n = 100	n = 50	n = 50

Table PR - 36

QUESTION: What are some things your 4 and 5 year olds do?

RESPONSE	TOTAL NUMBER OF PROVIDERS (%)	LICENSED PROVIDERS (%)	UNLICENSED PROVIDERS (%)
Color, cut and paste	23.0	24.0	22.0
Great imagination	16.0	10.0	22.0
Outdoor play	14.0	22.0	6.0
Play with each other (more social)	11.0	10.0	12.0
Ride bikes (toys)	10.0	2.0	18.0
Do constructive projects and finish them	8.0	16.0	--
More independent - do it themself	7.0	14.0	--
Write alphabet	7.0	8.0	--
Arts and crafts	7.0	4.0	10.0
Group games	7.0	2.0	6.0
Watch TV	6.0	6.0	6.0
Jump and climb (play rougher)	6.0	6.0	6.0
Longer atention span	6.0	12.0	
Like to help	4.0	6.0	2.0
Ask questions no answer to	4.0	--	8.0
Inquisitive	4.0	6.0	2.0
Work on school related subjects	4.0	4.0	4.0
Play with blocks/tinkertoys	3.0	4.0	2.0
Listen to records	2.0	4.0	--
Able to follow example	2.0	4.0	--
Better coordination	2.0	4.0	--
Talk constantly	2.0	4.0	--
More willing to share (when asked)	1.0	2.0	--
Very possessive of other children	1.0	--	2.0
Express own opinion	1.0	2.0	--
Play with particular toy	1.0	2.0	--
Harder to satisfy	1.0	2.0	--
Write names	1.0	--	2.0
dress themself	1.0	--	2.0
	n = 100	n = 50	n = 50

activities during the day (Table PR-31). Little difference was observed between the two groups in the percentage of their time spent on various activities.

Planned daily program and curriculum. Family day care is often criticized for its lack of an educational component. The interviewers saw few or no planned daily programs with an educational component. This was true for both groups. Very few providers had a written program addressing the four areas of growth and development. The interviewers believed that both groups of providers could benefit from training in child development. As one interviewer commented, it was evident that "children needed more opportunities for music experience, finger plays, gross motor activities and cognitive development."

Use of television. A large number of providers (88% certified and 84% uncertified) were in favor of television watching if monitored. According to the reported data, a child in a certified home watches twice as many hours of television as does a child in an uncertified facility. The programs ranged from cartoons and children's shows to comedies and soap operas. Interviewers observed that the television frequently was on during the entire interview, although some of the children did not necessarily watch it. One must wonder about the quality of care in a situation with constant background noise and possible distractions for the provider as well as the children.

Provider-child interaction. Inconsistent behavior was observed on the part of some of the providers when interacting with the children. Several providers had unrealistic expectations of children and became frustrated with the children. However, there were a few who demonstrated their knowledge of child development by the manner in which they interacted with the children.

One interviewer's observation read: "The provider indicated that she was in day care to make some money. She didn't appear to enjoy it. She had expectations that the child in care should not converse with the interviewer and kept saying, 'you better watch it or you will get it.' She mentioned that she has had trouble with her four-year-old daughter, so she took parenting classes."

For another provider, the interviewer noted: "The provider would get very angry and say 'go downstairs', then would push or shove or take them downstairs. A minute later the children were doing what she said not to."

However, the interviewers' comments also included: "The provider seemed attentive to children. There were age appropriate toys. A two-year-old was having 'tantrums'. She ignored it and said she felt this was the best way and later held the child in her lap to comfort him."

Toilet training and diapering. Since a significantly large percentage of children enrolled in family day care are under three years of age, toilet training is an important aspect of their care. Although the study did not

Table PR - 31

AMOUNT OF TIME SPENT ON THE FOLLOWING ACTIVITIES:

ACTIVITIES	TOTAL NUMBER OF PROVIDERS (%)	LICENSED PROVIDERS (%)	UNLICENSED PROVIDERS (%)
Caring for children	64.0	64.0	64.0
Housework	11.0	11.0	12.0
Preparing meals	9.0	10.0	9.0
Watching TV	7.0	6.0	8.0
Greeting parents	5.0	5.0	4.0
Phone calls	4.0	4.0	3.0
	n = 101	n = 51	n = 50

address this issue specifically, the interviewers did record several observations, included the following:

> "A mother brought an infant to the facility during the interview and informed the provider that the child had "messed his pants." The provider did not change the child for at least 30 minutes, till the interviewer left. Beyond that, who knows how much longer it took her to change the child."
>
> "There was a potty chair in the kitchen. A child just squatted and went - then got up without wiping. The child wasn't wearing underwear. The provider watched, but did not make a move to do anything."

Health and safety. Although the majority of the facilities visited by the interviewers were considered clean, some facilities were marginal. This was true of both certified and uncertified facilities.

At one facility the interviewer noted "four sacks of garbage in the kitchen - cats walking on counter and table." Another interviewer commented that a provider "was making cookies when I got there and kept licking her fingers and putting them back in the dough."

One day care provider had brought her thirteen-month-old to the Resource Center in a stroller, as she did not have a car. She left the infant outside while she went to the bathroom. The same provider was observed to have had no toys for her youngster at home. The interviewer observed that the child was getting into the same things again and again. At one point, the child got into the cupboard beneath the sink and got out a bottle of dishwashing soap.

Supervision. Asked to discuss their supervision, a large number of providers responded "am with them," "check on them," or "watch them" (Table PR-44). Providers reported that the primary nature of their interaction with the children in their care included observing, encouraging, playing, teaching and disciplining (Table PR-32). However, some inconsistencies became apparent when the data reported by the providers was compared to what was observed. One provider indicated that she checked on children every 10-15 minutes, but during the one-hour interviewing session, she failed to check even once on a child playing in another room.

The majority of the day care providers' attitudes toward supervision can best be summarized by quoting one of their colleagues: "I go from child to child. I like to be doing something. I still like to watch them. They like to be by themselves; need to learn to entertain themselves. Home day care gives a feeling of what it would be like at home. Mama being there if they need her, but she still has things to do, though she works with them."

Meals and snacks.

Nutrition is a vital element in the normal growth and development of young children and consequently an essential ingredient in quality programs.

Table PR - 44

QUESTION: Discuss your supervision of children, indoors and outside.

RESPONSES	PERCENT OF LICENSED PROVIDERS	PERCENT OF UNLICENSED PROVIDERS
Check on them, watch them	38%	62%
Watch through window	32%	-
Am with them	28%	22%
Restrict areas	2%	6%
Play on their own	-	6%
Make it as if child is at home	-	2%
Don't go out	-	2%
	n = 51	n = 50

Table PR - 32

THE PRIMARY NATURE OF PROVIDERS' INTERACTION WITH CHILDREN AS REPORTED BY THE PROVIDER

INTERACTION	TOTAL NUMBER OF PROVIDERS (%)	LICENSED PROVIDERS (%)	UNLICENSED PROVIDERS (%)
Observing/ supervising	86.1	86.3	86.0
Encouraging	85.1	90.2	80.0
Playing with	80.2	74.5	86.0
Teaching	75.2	76.5	74.0
Discipline	57.4	58.8	56.0
*Other	17.8	17.6	18.0
	n = 101	n = 51	n = 50

*Others include:

1. pick them up and love them
2. do things with them - reading
3. talk with them
4. help me work
5. singing
6. individual attention
7. setting examples
8. help build character
9. try to be their friend
10. make sure everyone is getting along

Children in day care spend a majority of their waking hours there, and consume one meal and snacks, according to a large number of the providers interviewed (Table PR-48). Ninety-six percent of the certified providers and 46% of the uncertified providers served lunches; 90.2% of the certified and 78% of the uncertified facilities served snacks. A quick analysis of the data indicated that certified providers served more balanced meals representing the four food groups and served milk as a beverage. (Wyoming day care standards do make specific recommendations regarding meal components.) Further analysis of the data revealed that a large percentage of those certified providers were also participants in the Child Care Food Program. Research shows that food patterns are formed early in life, and giving children the opportunity to eat a variety of foods helps them develop good eating habits.

However, not all the children in day care were lucky enough to be served these balanced meals while comfortably seated on child-sized chairs. The data indicates that only 51% of the providers had child-sized tables and chairs. One interviewer observed that the children ate their snacks while walking in the living room.

Parent-provider interaction. During the course of the interview, several providers shared with the interviewers the concerns they had regarding their relationship with the parents of their day care children. One interviewer wrote: "she worries about what the parents think of her. Also, she said that the parents dictated to her as to what they wanted and what they would pay. She said that's wrong. It should have been on her terms." She used cartoons as a calm down period before parents come and added, "if the parents come and their children are wild they get mad at me."

A common concern expressed by providers was not being able to collect the day care fees from the parents. Providers feel that the parents take advantage of them. Interestingly enough, when the providers were asked what they liked least about their job, their number one answer was "parents."

Parents on the other hand, have also had concerns regarding their relationship with the providers. Parents feel that the providers do not share complete information with regard to their children's daily experiences. One parent indicated that for the two weeks her child was at day care, the provider assured her that the child never cried and was happy at the facility. Sensing the child's reluctance to go to that provider, the parent changed providers and later found out, much to the dismay of the parents, that the child cried the whole time he was there.

With a better understanding of each other's needs and a better communication between the two caregivers of the child, the parent and the provider, some of these problems can be alleviated.

Environmental Review

To obtain additional information on day to day experiences, 15 certified and 14 uncertified providers were selected and an in-depth environmental review was conducted. Areas focused on were space and furnishings, basic care, language and reasoning, learning activities, social development and adult needs.

Table PR - 48

TYPES OF MEALS SERVED

MEALS	LICENSED PROVIDERS (%)	UNLICENSED PROVIDERS (%)
Lunch	96.1	46.0
Snacks	90.2	78.0
Breakfast	41.2	44.0
Supper	11.8	12.0
	n = 51	n = 50

The certified providers consistently scored higher in all areas except social development. Because of the small sample size, no conclusions are drawn. However, this information does substantiate the findings as reported by the providers themselves that certified providers are more apt to emphasize the physical elements while uncertified providers emphasize the "homey atmosphere" (Table PR-54).

No marked difference was observed by the interviewers among the two groups regarding provider-child interaction and disciplinary measures taken.

Providers' Self-Assessment

To assess the provider's own opinion of her care, the interviewers asked "what makes your day care so special that, if you were looking for child care for your own children, you would choose your own day care?" (Table PR-54).

The responses included such comments as "I love children," "they get good care," and "I treat them like my own," but are best summarized by the provider who said "There are so few people that would treat the kids like I do, I give them love and the attention they need. They're like my own. They know what they can and cna't get away with. They know I won't hold a grudge." The providers overwhelmingly indicated their love for children as evidenced by their response to the open-ended question on what they liked about their job (Table PR-16). Also, when asked what their main concerns were as family day care providers, the care for children was the number one answer (Table PR-15). Such consistent responses leads one to conclude that the majority of the providers do indeed care about children.

Providers' knowledge of child development was evaluated by asking them what the children of various age groups in their care do during the day (Tables PR-34,35,36). Most of the providers were able to give at least one age appropriate characteristic, but only a few could share more than two characteristics per age group. Based on this data, the observations made by the interviewers, and previous contacts with the providers, it is felt that although the majority of the providers like children, they have limited knowledge of child development.

If their love for children could be supplemented with appropriate training in child development, the family day care home could indeed be a rich, nurturing environment meeting children's needs.

On the issue of professionalism, the study indicates that a majority of family day care providers work in isolation, with little or no interaction with their peers (Table PR-59). The data indicated that a certified family day care provider is more apt to view herself as a professional, and that certified providers demonstrated more characteristics of a professional as assessed by the number of children enrolled, attendance at workshops, emphasis on the physical setting and their ability to use local resources to assist them in their work. However, both groups do have room to improve in the above mentioned areas.

Table PR - 54

QUESTION: What makes your day care so special?

RESPONSE	PERCENT OF LICENSED PROVIDERS	PERCENT OF UNLICENSED PROVIDERS
Care & attention	54%	58%
Physical aspect (cleanliness, space, toys)	26%	20%
Homey family environment	8%	18%
Get along well with children	6%	-
Experience	2%	2%
Schedule	2%	-
Price	2%	-
Information not available	-	2%
	n = 50	n = 50

Table PR - 16

QUESTION: What things do you like most about your job as a day care provider?

RESPONSE	LICENSED PROVIDERS (%)	UNLICENSED PROVIDERS (%)
Love for children	68.0	52.0
Can be at home with own children	14.0	22.0
Can work at home	10.0	6.0
Benefits own children	--	10.0
*Others	8.0	6.0
Information not available	--	4.0
	n = 50	n = 50

*Other includes:

1. Benefits received
2. Flexibility in hours of work
3. Don't like it
4. Helping other people
5. Depends on children
6. A method to make money

Table PR - 15

MAIN CONCERNS OF THE FAMILY DAY CARE PROVIDERS

CONCERNS	LICENSED PROVIDERS	UNLICENSED PROVIDERS
	(%)	(%)
Care of child	27.0	24.0
Cleanliness/safety of child	25.5	10.0
Children's satisfaction	23.5	14.0
More involved parents	4.0	--
Business aspect of day care	4.0	--
Personal/family problems caused by the day care in my home	2.0	2.0
High quality care and learning for the children under my care	2.0	12.0
Income	2.0	--
Job satisfaction	--	6.0
Parental satisfaction	--	4.0
Regulatory/licensure compliance	--	2.0
Other	10.0	28.0
	n = 51	n = 50

Other includes:

1. Provider being a good model to children
2. Finding a child compatible with my own
3. Feeding
4. Discipline
5. Parental treatment of children
6. Parents following through
7. Being able to locate parents

Table PR - 59

NUMBER OF PROVIDERS WHO ARE MEMBERS OF DAY CARE ASSOCIATIONS

	TOTAL NUMBER OF PROVIDERS	LICENSED PROVIDERS	UNLICENSED PROVIDERS
	(%)	(%)	(%)
No	90.1	80.4	100.0
Yes	6.9	13.7	--
No response	3.0	5.9	--
	n = 101	n = 51	n = 50

Can Quality in Day Care Be Guaranteed?

Perhaps it cannot. But steps such as inspections, community education, parent involvement and provider training can certainly play a critical role in improving the quality of day care.

The participants in day care - the parents, the providers and the regulators - share an interest in quality in day care, but play different roles. "Good versus poor day care essentially revolves around the training and ability of those who care for the children."[4] Most providers have indicated that they do care about children, thus they already possess a key ingredient for quality care. If they see the value of training, and know what constitutes good care, these providers can improve the quality of their services. They can provide programs with educational components and curriculum which is conducive to the growth and nurturing of children. They should be familiar with and utilize existing community resources, which will help them do their job more efficiently.

One must work towards developing day care as a career, in which the provider receives training, is evaluated on her performance and is recognized by the community through programs such as the two-tier certification process, the "Stamp of Approval," and "more pay for more training."

The role of the parent is a key factor in any quality program. Officials of the State Department of Public Assistance and Social Services indicated that they felt it is the parents' responsibility to monitor quality in day care. The parents themselves felt that when it came to quality it was their responsibility (Table PA-26). The parents can excercise their control by choosing not to take their children to facilities which are mediocre. They should also report situations which can be potentially harmful to children to regulatory agencies. The more parents become involved in their children's day care, the more influence they will have.

The regulatory agencies' responsibilities include inspections, uniformity of enforcement, community education and appropriating adequate funding. Funds should be made available for training, low-interest loans for the purchase of equipment and for repairs to bring the facilities into compliance with the safety codes, toy lending libraries and resource center. Regulatory agencies should facilitate the development of programs which recognize providers' efforts and performance.

Availability of Family Day Care

The problem of family day care in Casper centers on quantity as well as quality. In a town such as Casper, where a large number of residents are young, have children, are transient and have little or no extended local family system, the need for visible quality programs is obvious. The fact that several day care centers are not operating at full capacity may lead one to conclude that there is no need for more day care facilities. However, as this study indicated, a large portion of the parents prefer taking their children to neighborhood family day care homes (Table PA-1).

Table PA - 26

QUESTION: Who is responsible for quality in day care?

	TOTAL	% OF PARENTS
Parents	28	37%
Providers	17	22%
Parents & community	11	14%
Governments	9	12%
Parents & providers	8	11%
Governments & providers	1	3%
Private agencies	1	1%

n = 75

Table PA - 1

QUESTION: What type of day care do you use?

TYPE	% OF PARENTS
Family day care home	44.0%
Day care center	32.0%
Group day care home	15.0%
*Other	8.0%

n = 156*

*The parents whose responses were used for the above questions were identified by the employers and the newspaper birth announcements. Answers given by those parents who were identified by the family day care providers as their clients were not used for the above data so that the results will not be biased.

*Others include:

1. in-home care (child's home)

These family day care homes are not highly visible in the community. The Casper Family Day Care Study's attempt to identify providers using a staff and extensive multiple recruitment method resulted in the identification of only 19% of the providers. One can only imagine the frustration a new parent in town may experience in trying to locate an appropriate day care provider for his/her child.

A total of 99 certified family day care facilities exist in Casper, serving some 500 children. Since the study indicates that approximately 2100 children in Casper are using family day care, the need for certified family day care facilities becomes apparent. Other areas in which current needs are unmet, as identified by this study, are the following:

1. care for children whose parents work shifts;
2. care for sick children/children with special needs;
3. before or after school care;
4. preschool curriculum in day care facilities; and
5. care for infants.

Studies project that by 1990 the nation will experience a dramatic increase of women in the labor force with children under three years of age, thus increasing the need for infant and toddler day care. Since parents show a distinct preference for home-type care for this age group, it is recommended that public policies focus on meeting this need by encouraging growth of family day care facilities to meet this need. The providers should be encouraged to be certified, thus making them visible and accessible to the consumer. They should also be assisted financially in the purchase of such necessary nursery items as cribs, mobiles and high-chairs.

Public funds should be allocated for income eligible families to purchase day care for infants at a higher rate, as infant care is more tedious and time consuming. This in turn will encourage more providers to offer infant care.

Affordability of Family Day Care

For many families with young children, the biggest problem related to child care is cost. Low-income families may pay as much as one-third of their gross income for child care even though providers often work for less than minimum wage with no benefits.

Since the end of World War II, there has been a dramatic influx of women into the labor force. Researchers feel that women in the labor force are here to stay. Many families that formerly lived on one salary now need two salaries to get by. Although women sometimes work for personal satisfaction, more women are working because the additional income is needed for survival. She may be the sole support of her family, or she may need to work because the total family income is low.

Approximately 43% of the women in the labor force are single, divorced, separated or widowed. Another 25% are married to men earning less than $10,500 per year. (Median family income in 1976 was $15,923 per year, and $16,009 in 1977).[6]

Unemployment and poor economic conditions raise a major barrier in effective parenting. Not only can the stress of economically providing for the family cause pressure, but it also interferes with the social and psychological tasks of parenting.[5]

Two-income families feel the pressures of maintaining their current economic situtations. One-income families, such as poor mothers or fathers, single, divorced, or widowed, feel the pressures of inadequate living conditions, mental and physical exhaustion, isolation, loneliness and bitterness.

In turn, these same pressures affect the children. They are not only being reared in a poor situation, they may also be deprived of adequate education and extra-curricular activities. These children often must carry the responsibilites of handling household chores, caring for brothers and sisters, and dealing with unhappy parents.

Day Care Needs

Working parents need day care for their children. In order for them to perform well at their jobs, they must feel secure about the care of their children while they are away.

Two-income families and single-parent families need day care. In the two-income families, both parents are away from their children and need day care services. If their income is still extremely low, and they cannot afford day care, they may opt to leave their children home alone and unattended. When one parent is laid off their job, the children are pulled out of day care and the unemployed parent tends to the children.

According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, 219,000 men stayed at home in 1974-1975, taking care of children while the mothers worked outside the home. Although some of these men are divorced fathers who seek and win custody, others are single adoptive parents. Today, some men are choosing to stay home full-time and parent while their wives work, or share income-producing functions with their wives, each working half-time and parenting half-time.[7]

Cost

The affordability of day care can be analyzed from three different perspectives: the provider, the parent and the public policy.

The provider. From the point of view of the family day care provider, day care is not a lucrative business. As a matter of fact, research indicates

economics and better paying jobs as the reason for high turnover in Casper. The certified provider fares better, as she is able to enroll more children. On the average she has an enrollment of 5.04 children, including her own, and an enrollment of 4.58 not counting her own children. Based on the daily rate charged by the provider, her/his daily gross income for a ten-hour day is equal to $37.55. She spends approximately, $1.25 per child per day on food, which totals an average of $5.73 per day. This reduces her daily gross income to $31.82, which translates into $3.18 per hour. This is below minimum wage for a group where the majority has at least twelve years of school or more. Out of this money she is expected to purchase toys and supplies, and pay for repair and maintenance for her house.

Federal subsidies such as the Child Care Food Program help providers with their grocery bills, however this subsidy is still not enough to enable them to earn a decent wage. The need for programs such as toy and equipment loan is clear. Public policies should be directed toward adequate wages for providers, which will promote stable employment.

Parents' affordability. The parents' point of view is the other side of the day care dilemma. The Casper study indicated that, although the majority of parents did not feel they were overpaying their providers for services delivered, they did feel that the day care fee has the potential to compete with necessary family expenses such as food and shelter. Also, with respect to the issue of the affordability of quality care, most parents perceived the cost of certified facilities to be higher than that of uncertified although this is not necessarily the case.

An example of a hypothetical case developed by the local Department of Public Assistance and Social Services is attached with the Appendix. This hypothetical parent is earning $6 per hour, with a monthly income of $960. The parent pays $289 per month for care for her two children ($.80 per hour for the first child and $.60 per hour for the second child). According to the Moneycheck Monthly Budget Analysis, she is overspending her net monthly income of $806.40 by $215. As indicated in the Budget (Appendix), the parent is not allowing for medical expenses, recreation or insurance. Food and shelter allowance is also limited.

In order for this parent to continue working, she needs assistance with her day care, but her wages exceed present income eligibility guidelines.

Public Policy

Elected officials should focus their attention on this issue of day care and take appropriate measures to protect day care children, and ensure that the provision and usage of day care is feasible for the provider as well as the parent. They should recognize that day care is here to stay. A balance should exist between the cost of care to parents, quality of care and providers' income. By providing adequate funding for the care of our nation's most important resource, its children, policy makers will be encouraging development of programs which will ensure normal growth and development of children. Further, they will be helping families to be self-sufficient and promoting full employment of parents.

Research has indicated that quality child care pays for itself in reduced need for social service programs and increased economic productivity.[8]

COMMUNITY SUPPORT PROGRAMS

Based on the information gathered and the results of the study, it is recommended that some of the existing support programs for day care be continued, more support be offered to those programs which are in embryonic stages, and some new programs be implemented to encourage professionalism, improve quality, and stimulate parent involvement. Some of these programs are discussed below.

Resource Center

As part of the day care study, funded by the City of Casper, a toy-lending library was established to offer resources to day care providers. Forty-four certified providers, six uncertified providers (all of whom later became certified), 17 parents and seven social service agencies participated in the services offered through the resource center over the past seven months. Twenty-four workshops on day care related topics were offered and an average of 13 providers attended each workshop. The toys and the training given to the caregivers provided the children an opportunity for an enriched environment, the providers an opportunity for peer interaction and improved job performance, and parents the means for more involvement in the care of their children. The study shows that 72% of the providers indicated that the resource services will assist them in their work (Table PR-24).

In the interest of providing services which encourage quality, the resource center and the training program should be continued. A small amount of money could be charged those providers attending workshops. In return, the provider's efforts to improve her services should be recognized by the certification process as described earlier, through an increased rate of pay for her services and/or giving her the Stamp of Approval.

Day Care Association

Casper has a day care association, the Child Care Committee, which receives staff support from Nutrition and Child Development, Inc., and is funded by the Natrona County Department of Public Assistance and Social Services. However, as the study indicates, only a small percent of providers are members of the group. It is recommended that more providers be encouraged to participate in the association. Providers' input regarding their interests should be taken into consideration and attempts should be made to show them the value of such membership. Perhaps one criterion used for the Stamp of Approval should be membership in a day care association.

Table PR - 24

RECOMMENDED RESOURCES TO ASSIST PROVIDERS' IN THEIR WORK

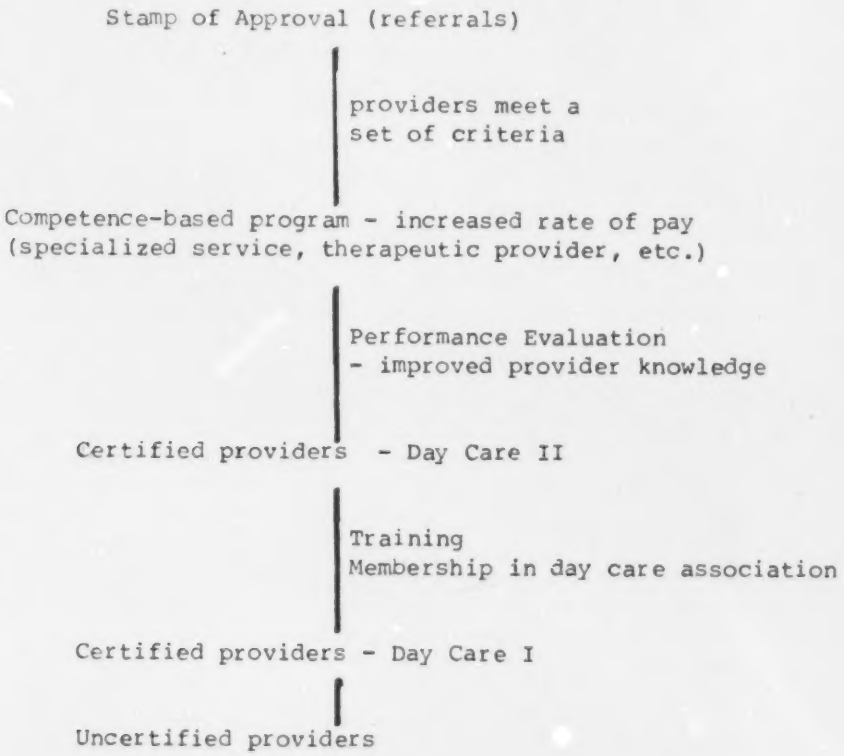
RESOURCES	TOTAL NUMBER OF PROVIDERS	LICENSED PROVIDERS	UNLICENSED PROVIDERS
	(%)	(%)	(%)
Day care workshops	82.2	88.2	76.0
Peer interaction	78.2	84.3	72.0
Resource services	72.3	72.5	72.0
Regulations	66.3	82.4	50.0
Day care associations	63.4	76.5	50.0
In-home training	58.4	58.8	58.0
*Other	6.9	7.8	6.0
	n = 101	n = 51	n = 50

*Others include:

1. Nutrition and Child Development, Inc.
2. literature delivered to home
3. substitute provider for emergencies
4. sick child care
5. fire inspection for family day care homes
6. poison prevention visit
7. knowledge of community events (field trips, etc.)

Development of Day Care as a Career

Specific steps should be taken to emphasize professionalism in day care by offering concrete benefits to the providers. Development of day care as a career is recommended. This program can be implemented in conjunction with the Stamp of Approval, training programs and the two-tier certification method. A competence-based provider evaluation program should be implemented, to assess a provider's performance as well as her knowledge of child care.[3] The family day care career ladder would serve as an incentive to improve providers' performance.


Stamp of Approval (referrals)
providers meet a set of criteria
Competence-based program - increased rate of pay (specialized service, therapeutic provider, etc.)
Performance Evaluation - improved provider knowledge
Certified providers - Day Care II
Training
Membership in day care association
Certified providers - Day Care I
Uncertified providers

Stamp of Approval

Under the auspices of the Natrona County Department of Public Assistance and Social Services and Nutrition and Child Development, Inc., a committee of providers and concerned citizens was formed to develop criteria for recognizing those providers who were attempting to provide or providing quality services. The committee was to establish, for parents seeking day care, a list of providers who meet explicit criteria in the operation of their day care facilities, and to offer information to providers on how they can upgrade the quality of their facilities to meet these criteria. Benefits to the providers would be referrals and more money for their services. A limited amount of funds for copying and mailing cost have been made available through the Natrona County Department of Public Assistance and Social Services. It is the recommendation of the study that this positive provider recognition be developed, and that a part-time staff position be established. Public funds may be needed initially to fully implement the program, but eventually a service league or employers should fund this program.

Information and Referral Service

The Natrona County Department of Public Assistance and Social Services provides funds for consumer information on day care. It is recommended that this service be better publicized and that services provided include information on certification, importance of quality in day care and how to select for quality in day care. Information and Referral Service can be an excellent avenue for consumer education. Providers will also benefit by the referrals they receive. Information on those providers who are attempting to move up the family day care career ladder will be made available to parents through this system.

Formation of the Day Care Advisory Board

To coordinate services provided by local agencies, and to address issues in day care, a local board should be formed. Its membership should include representatives from the City, the county Department of Public Assistance and Social Services, Public Health, Nutrition and Child Development, Inc., the school system, providers and parents, and the private sector. The board would meet quarterly, its members would share their programs, and a networking system would be developed to avoid duplications.

Employer Participation in Day Care

The Casper Family Day Care Study identified a few employers who expressed their interest in their employees' day care by either cash or in-kind contributions toward support services for day care, or they have made special adjustments to accomodate their employees' child care needs, for example, giving special consideration to nursing mothers (see results - Employer Participation in Day Care).

Employers are becoming aware of their employees' needs for day care services. Reasons such as increased number of women in the work force and increased number of single parent households have contributed towards this employer awareness.

The employers should be informed of the Economic Recovery Act of 1981, which offers increased tax advantages for employers and employees. The employers can provide cash or in-kind support for their employees' day care or they may assist their workers in finding suitable child care arrangements. They could either grant vouchers to purchase day care or contract with exsiting day care facilities to hold space for children of employees. The employers could also assist their employees by providing them a list of certified facilities or introducing them to the appropriate community services such as the Day Care Information and Referral.

The Casper Family Day Care Study was designed as a three-phase investigation to be implemented over a twelve month period. Phase I was to design and pilot the study, Phase II to collect the data and Phase III to analyze the data.

PHASE I

Phase I of this study entailed the development of the research project, development of a resource center, and identification of family day care providers.

Research Instrument

Three questionnaires were developed to obtain information from various participants of day care. The providers and regulatory agencies were interviewed, while the parents completed the questionnaires themselves.

Providers' Questionnaires

With the cooperation of the Review Panel and research experts at the University of Wyoming, the staff of Nutrition and Child Development, Inc., developed questionnaires which were designed to provide comprehensive information on day care providers. A combination of forced-choice, rank-order and open-ended questions were used not only to obtain easily "codeable" answers, but also to encourage relevant comments from the participants without directing their thinking.

Much thought was given to various sections of the questionnaires addressing all significant aspects of day care. For example, in order to obtain information on providers' knowledge of child development, the providers were asked about the types of activities available to children in their care.

Federal Day Care Regulations (no longer in effect) and Wyoming Day Care Regulations were used as guidelines in developing a questionnaire which would assess the prevalent conditions in day care.

Regulatory Agencies' Questionnaires

The State Department of Public Assistance and Social Services, Natrona County Department of Public Assistance and Social Services, and City of Casper officials were asked to participate in the study. Some of the officials asked to review the questionnaire prior to the interview. Because of the open-ended question format, it was felt that the results would not be affected if the officials had an opportunity to review the research instrument ahead of time.

Parents' Questionnaires

Many methods were used to recruit parents for the survey. The study identified the parents through employers, day care providers and by reviewing the birth announcements of the past five years listed in the newspaper. This multiple identification method provided a base broad enough for a good sample of parents. More than 1,000 questionnaires were either directly mailed to parents or given to employers and providers to pass out. Some 200 questionnaires had been returned at the time of the cutoff date. Since then, additional questionnaires have been mailed back; these were not used in tabulating the results of the study.

Resource Center

During this phase, a resource center for family day care providers was developed. The center served as a meeting place for family day care providers, parents, and staff members of community service agencies. Toys, books, and equipment were made available on a free-loan basis. Other elements of the program included a monthly family day care newsletter, training day care providers and acquainting them with other community resources.

Provider Identification Procedure

Certified

Certified family day care providers were identified through information from the County Department of Public Assistance and Social Services. This was a simple means of identification.

Uncertified

Uncertified family day care providers were identified through various means. A promotional campaign was launched in October, 1982, to inform as many people as possible in the Casper area about the Day Care Study and to create a positive image for it. It was felt that positive promotion of the study was essential to gain the cooperation of the community.

Posters and brochures were distributed to businesses, organizations and agencies throughout the city. Both newspapers published feature articles about the study and public service announcements on local radio stations asked for help in identifying day care providers. More than 75 organizations, including schools, businesses, city, county and federal offices, churches, clubs and organizations were personally contacted and visited to provide information about the study and seek cooperation in identifying day care providers. Nutrition and Child Development, Inc., also distributed information about the study through the Blue Envelope Health Fair, food stamp inserts, State Department of Public Assistance and Social Services Butter Distribution, and the Immunization and Well

Baby Clinics sponsored by Public Health.

Another method used to identify uncertified day care providers was the placement of advertisements in the newspaper and on bulletin boards around the city. Newspaper child care ads were reviewed twice a week and checked against a file of certified providers listed by telephone number. Uncertified providers were then called and asked to participate in the study. Bulletin boards in the laundromats and grocery stores were also periodically checked for child care ads.

The day care community was contacted through individual letters, phone calls and the monthly newsletter for cooperation in the study. Family day care providers were also recruited to canvass their own neighborhoods for uncertified day care providers. Yet another means of identifying home day cares was driving through neighborhoods at various times of the day, looking for visible signs of a day care such as playground equipment, parents dropping off or picking up children, large numbers of children playing, etc.

The study staff also canvassed four percent of the population in selected census tracts in Casper. This number was orginally designed to be used to project the total number of uncertified day care facilities in Casper. Although the study did identify several day care providers by using this method, it was felt the information obtained was not complete enough to be the sole basis for projecting the number of uncertified facilities.

Pilot Study

In February, 1983, a pilot was conducted to obtain preliminary information on significant variables, interviewing and implementation procedures and providers' attitudes toward the study. Various aspects of the study were tested and the research instrument was refined based on the information obtained. Preliminary data from this pilot were used to develop a data analysis plan for this study as a whole.

Fifteen certified family day care providers and fifteen uncertified providers, randomly selected, participated in the pilot. Only three out of eighteen uncertified providers originally contacted refused to participate.

Once the providers were identifed, they were informed of the study via a letter assuring them all sources of information would be kept confidential. The letters were followed by phone calls to schedule interviews.

PHASE II

During Phase II, an in-depth study was implemented. A study sample of 50 certified and 50 uncertified providers was selected for comparison purposes. Various participants in family day care; the parents, children,

providers, and regulatory agencies, were interviewed. Day-to-day interactions and experiences in family day care were observed and documented.

Sampling Procedure

The sample of 50 of the certified day care providers was selected at random from the list obtained from the Department of Public Assistance and Social Services. It was felt that this sample was excellent because of its size and randomness. The uncertified day care providers were selected from the list Nutrition and Child Development, Inc., had compiled by utilizing the multiple identification techniques. The uncertified day care homes identified represented approximately 20% of all informal day care estimated by Nutrition and Child Development, Inc., (450 providers) who provided care for working parents' children. Because a majority of the providers contacted expressed their willingness to participate and because of the sample size of 50 and the random method of selection, it was felt that the study sample of the uncertified facilities was also a good representation of the group.

To insure a random sampling of providers for interviewing, both certified and uncertified providers' names were written on separate cards and 50 of each group were drawn. Because of the high turnover rate of uncertified providers, all uncertified providers on our lists who were still in child care and agreed to participate were interviewed.

The providers selected were informed of the study via a letter followed by phone calls to schedule interviews.

Interviewing Procedure

Special consideration was given to interviewing the day care providers. Only two persons conducted the interviews throughout the study. After the pilot was completed, the interviewers reviewed the questionnaires and discussed ways to rephrase questions that providers did not understand. It was agreed that rather than having the provider fill out the questionnaire, the questions would be asked orally and recorded by the interviewer.

Because it was important that the providers not feel threatened, special attention was paid to the detials of the interview. Both interviewers dressed casually, usually in slacks. A warm-up conversation preceded the interview and participants were told to attend to the children's needs whenever necessary. The interviewers took care not to give feedback nor to prompt the participant; they did, however, answer questions when it was possible to do so without affecting their answers on the questionnaire. An invitation to visit the Resource Center to check out toys, equipment, or books was extended to each provider.

Environmental Reviews

To obtain more in-depth information, environmental reviews were performed by the same two interviewers used for the study. A trail environmental review with one provider was conducted separately by both interviewers. A comparison was made, and the results used to ensure consistency.

Fifteen certified and fourteen uncertified providers participated in the environmental reviews. Day care providers were asked to do what they would normally do. Interviewers spent a minimum of one hour with each day care provider, using a majority of the time to observe activity and conditions in the facility. During the last fifteen minutes, the interviewer asked questions about those items she did not observe.

Resource Center

A professional staff member who was also responsible for conducting interviews operated the resource center between December, 1983, and August, 1983. The resource center offered an incentive to day care providers, encouraging them to identify themselves and to participate in the program. Further, the resource center was used for an ongoing day care training program.

Between the months of January and May, 24 workshops were offered in child care topics through the resource center. During summer months, in response to requests from the providers, 14 children's programs were sponsored. They included such topics as safety and jazzercize.

Projection of Number of Day Care Providers

As previously noted, the number of providers in Casper was projected on the basis of two sources of information. The first source was a list of certified providers obtained from the local Department of Public Assistance and Social Services, and the second source of data was canvassing. A four percent survey of the population in the selected census tracts was initially designed to aid in projecting the number of uncertified facilities in Casper.

Several factors could have contributed to the limited success of the canvassing method, including a reluctance on the part of the residents to share information about who was providing day care in their neighborhood, and lack of visibility because of the cold weather forcing children to stay indoors.

It was felt that by employing two other methods, one could project the total number of uncertified facilities more accurately. The first method utilized the information obtained from the multiple recruitment method. The second method addressed the issue of the number of potential consumers of day care, and thus the estimated number of certified as well as uncertified providers.

It was felt that by using two different methods and arriving at similar results, the numbers projected would be within an accurate range. The two methods served as checks for each other.

Multiple Recruitment Method

This method was designed to use the already known population of the certified day care providers to project the number who were uncertified. Providers, irrespective of their licensure, were identified through multiple recruitment techniques. By comparing the percentage of certified facilities which were identified using these techniques, one can project the number of uncertified providers.

The results of this method were compared with the results of the second method, using the number of potential consumers of day care.

Potential Consumers of Day Care

State Department of Public Assistance and Social Services (Report on Wyoming Early Childhood Program December 15, 1982) estimated that a total of 1,870 uncertified slots were available in Natrona County. This information was used to arrive at the number of uncertified slots in Casper. Based on the number of children per uncertified family day care facility, as obtained from the study, the number of uncertified family day care facilities in Casper was projected.

Turnover

The turnover rates among certified and uncertified providers were determined by identifying the providers at a given time and following up seven months later to determine whether the providers were still offering day care.

PHASE III

The data obtained during Phase III were compiled and analyzed. The results were reviewed and interpreted by the research analysts. The day care panel reviewed the results and assisted in writing the report, with recommendations to the day care community on improving the quality and availability of day care.

Analysis of the Data

The data obtained from the study were compiled and analyzed using

computer services as well as manually. Data on open-ended questions were tabulated manually. Data of the majority of the forced-choice or rank-order questions were analyzed to examine the distributional characteristics of each of the independent and dependent variables under investigation. Both con-descriptive and frequency statistical procedures were used. For further analysis of some of the variables used to determine significant differences between certified and uncertified providers, or users of different types of day care, discriminant analysis was used. Discriminant analysis is a more powerful statistical routine. Data determined to be significantly different were at .01 significant level.

The results of the data obtained from the study are reported in two forms, the narrative form and the tabular form. The narrative form pertains to that aspect of the data which was not directly obtained from the questionnaires, including the turnover rate for providers, projection of the number of uncertified family day care homes, community support for day care and the participation in the resource center activities.

The information reported in the tabular form was obtained from the three questionnaires, and was compiled on a question-by-question basis per research instrument used.

Turnover

A list of certified day care providers was obtained from the Natrona County Department of Public Assistance and Social Services in December, 1982. Based on the information provided, it was determined that there were 99 certified (registered) family day care providers in Casper. Review of this list, and calls to confirm if the providers were still in day care indicated that 27 of the 99 providers were no longer offering day care. Similar results have been reported by national studies. This reduced the sample size of the certified providers to 72. In July, 1983, the remaining 72 day care providers were reviewed, and it was discovered that 65 of these were still offering day care. Of the seven who were no longer active in day care, two had moved out of town, three were positively identified as not providing day care, one provider was not reached by phone, and one provider's license was not renewed. If it is assumed that the provider who was not reached after repeated attempts was no longer in day care, the turnover rate among the certified providers over the seven-month period was 7 divided by 72 = 9.72 percent.

The study positively identified 75 uncertified providers who were actively involved in day care in the month of February, 1983. In July, 1983, this list was reviewed to determine the number of providers who were still offering day care. A total of 39 of the uncertified providers were identified as not offering day care. Another 7 providers had either had their phones disconnected or were not reached. Only 29 of the original providers were still in day care six months later. The turnover rate for uncertified providers was 61.33%, which is considerably higher than reported nationally.

A poor local economy could contribute to such a high rate of turnover. Another factor is the fact the review of the list of providers was conducted during summer months, a time when providers with only a few children normally quit to spend time with their own family. The fact remains, however, that a much higher rate of turnover was observed among the uncertified facilities than among the certified by almost six to one over the same period.

Projected Number of Uncertified Providers

Multiple Recruitment Method. This method was designed to use the already known population of the certified day care providers to project the number who are uncertified. Providers irrespective of their licensure were identified through this multiple recruitment method. By comparing the percentage of certified facilities which were identified using these techniques, Nutrition and Child Development, Inc., projected the number of uncertified facilities. Of the 99 certified family day care home providers in Casper, the study was able to identify only 19 providers, which is 19.19% of the known population.

The maximum number of uncertified providers identified as providing day care at any given time was 86. Based on the assumption that the study would identify only 19.19% of the uncertified facilities as well, it is projected that the number of uncertified facilities in Casper is 448.

Potential Consumers of Day Care. Based on the information obtained from the State Department of Public Assistance and Social Services (Report on Wyoming Early Childhood Program, December 15, 1982), it was estimated that 1870 uncertified slots are available in Natrona County. According to this study, there are 3.52 children per uncertified facility. Dividing 1870 slots by 3.52 children one arrives at 531 uncertified homes in Natrona County. Based on the distribution of licensed family day care homes, 83% in Casper and 17% in the remaining sections of the county, ther are an estimated 440 uncertified homes in Casper (525x.83).

Thus, it is estimated that the number of uncertified homes is 450. Because the results obtained from utilizing two entirely different methods are very similar, it is felt that the information is valid and reliable. Though not all of the uncertified providers are necessarily out of compliance.

Community Support

In order for the study to be truly successful, it needed to generate interest in the day care community and obtain their support. The community was informed of the purpose of the study. Several agencies and groups representing the various participants of the day care scene were contacted. Their support and appreciation for this project has been demonstrated by several letters of support received from both individuals as well as agencies. The Casper Art Guild also exhibited their support for the study by generously donating 3 child-oriented original paintings to the resource center.

The support from the media was exemplary as evidenced by the front page article on the study in the Casper Star-Tribune and a rather detailed positive article published by the Casper Journal. The radio and television stations expressed their interest in the study and scheduled public service announcements to educate the community.

The positive response from the community and the media was overwhelmingly pleasant and was much appreciated.

Employer Participation in Day Care

After meeting with several employers, it became clear that a few of them are addressing the family concerns of employees. Since the study's goal is to share information on the total day care scene, it is felt perhaps that any attempt on the employers' part to meet the child care needs of their employees is significant enough to be shared with the community.

A local convenience store-chain has expressed interest in addressing the issue of their employees' day care, especially those employees who work shifts. Also, some of the local banks seem interested in learning more about programs which focus on employees' day care needs.

Further, as mentioned in an earlier report (June 1983), the City of Casper itself has indicated its awareness of employees' child care needs by providing special consideration to some of its employees.

Resource Center

The resource center which was a part of the City Study to offer support services to day care was first located at 100 South Elk. Later, the Day Care Resource Center moved to 1800 East K Street, in the old Rocky Mountain Gun Club.

Lending Library. Forty-four certified providers, 6 uncertified (who became certified) and 17 parents used the toy lending library. The mahority of toys, books, and equipment were donated. Forty-five organizations or individuals donated items or their time to the resource center. Recognition of contributions was given by sending a letter and certificated of appreciation, as well as placing their names on a large donor board with "Big Bird" that was on display at the resource center. The center was fortunate in having a former first grade teacher volunteering her time to make learning materials that were laminated for loan at the resource center.

Workshops. Twenty-four workshops on child care issues were offered through the resource center, with an average attendance of 13 people. Since each of the workshops was advertised in the newspaper, many parents attended along with day care providers. The workshops offered those in attendance free training and self-improvement. The relaxed atmosphere, combined with the small group size, afforded excellent discussions and participation in the workshops. For day

care providers who attended five workshops, a 400-page book, Learning Experiences for Young Children, donated by the State Department of Public Assistance and Social Services was given. This was an excellent source for appropriate activities in all stages and areas of development.

Fourteen children's programs were offered in the summer months. From 2 to 20 children attended each session.

Provider Involvement. Success of the resource center was gauged by the amount of involvement of day care providers, and many efforts were made to tailor the center to their needs. To obtain their input, the providers were requested to complete a checklist of workshops they would like to attend. Catalogs of toys, learning aids, and day care equipment were displayed to encourage providers to give suggestions on items they would like to have available at the resource center.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Casper Family Day Care Study was funded by the City of Casper in September, 1982. The purpose of the study was to develop a detailed composite of day care in Casper in an attempt to improve quality in day care. The City of Casper should be commended for being the first city in Wyoming to officially recognize the need for quality care by funding this project. The efforts of the City Manager, Mr. Ken Erickson, and the Mayor, Ms. Kaye McCrary, brought the importance of day care to the attention of the City Council, and the City Council in turn, exhibited its commitment to affordable quality day care programs by funding this project.

Valuable contributions were made by the members on the Review Panel: Mary Clouser, Natrona County D-PASS; Julie McMahon, Director, Public Health Nursing; Kay Mathewson, State D-PASS; Mary Whaley, Child Development Specialist and mother; and City Council members Joe Corrigan and Mary Behrens. Other ex-officio members who were not in attendance but made valuable suggestions were Gwen Quig, a day care provider, and Mayor Kaye McCrary. The Review Panel played a critical role in developing the research instrument, analyzing and interpreting the data, making recommendations based on the data and helping to publicize the study. Because the Review Panel brought with them a wealth of experience and knowledge in child care, research design and public relations, their contributions broadened the base of the study and made it far more complete.

Other key participants of this study were the providers. Without their cooperation and assitance in helping us gather information, the study could not have been completed. Both groups of providers, certified and uncertified, welcomed our interviewers and seemed more than willing to talk about the care they provide. The study is also indebted to the more than 200 parents who voluntarily completed the questionnaire in a desire to provide information which will be used to improve the quality of care. The study also benefited greatly from the assistance of the three regulatory agencies, State D-PASS, Natrona County D-PASS and the City of Casper, all of whom were willing to meet with the project director and share their opinions on and concerns about family day care.

Special contributions were made by several local employers who helped Nutrition and Child Development, Inc., distribute its questionnaires to their employees and information to the community. Some of these included First Interstate Bank of Casper, Mini-Mart, Inc., the City of Casper, Natrona County D-PASS, Casper College, Memorial Hospital of Natrona County, the Casper Star Tribune, the Casper Hilton Inn, Target, Mr. Steak and Cosmetic Arts Sciences Beauty Salon. Special thanks go to the many other local merchants who displayed posters informing the community of the study and its significance.

The study expresses its appreciation to the local media: KTWO Radio and Television, KCWY Radio and Television, the Casper Star Tribune and the Casper Journal for their positive news coverage of the study. Their efforts brought the study to the attention of the community, which prompted donations

to the Resource Center and calls inquiring about the study.

A significant contribution was made by Dr. Gary Benson of the University of Wyoming, who reviewed the research instruments, and analyzed and interpreted the data for statistical validity. His expertise in research analysis was of great value to the study.

Special contributions were also made by Ms. Rebecca Gunther, Administrative Analyst for the City of Casper, for her valuable suggestions and evaluations of the research design, implementation of the study and assistance during the writing of this report.

The project director is specially appreciative of the efforts of Ms. Sue Berchenbriter and Ms. Rachel Hunt, the interviewers, who worked so diligently in scheduling visits, building a rapport with the providers and collecting data. Ms. Hunt also spent several hours compiling the data on the open-ended questions. A special thanks goes to Ms. Margo Hoogterp of the Nutrition and Child Development, Inc., staff in Laramie, for her help with library work; she was an excellent resource in finding needed references.

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The study is grateful to all those groups, organizations and individuals who believed in the study, helped in its implementation and helped with operation of the resource center by donating their time, materials and talents.

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CASE OF THE HYPOTHETICAL PARENT*

This case is a household of three, with a mother and two pre-school children. This parent earns $6 per hour, 40 hours a week, with a gross monthly income of $960 per month. Her wages, the only income, places this family over the gross income eligibility standard of $746 for a household of three necessary to be eligible for social services and day care.

Both children attend the same day care facility nine hours a day, 23 days per month. (The mother is charged .80 per hour for the first child and .60 per hour for the second child, which totals $289.80 per month for day care expenses. This is 28.4% of her total monthly expenditure.)

According to the Moneycheck Monthly Budget Analysis, she is overspending her net monthly income of $806.40 by $215. This household is not eligible for food stamps because her income is over the gross income standard for food stamps of $841 for a household of three.

With state provided day care assistance, this parent would save $289.80 each month and spend $731.60 per month which is within her monthly income. It should be noted that this parent is not allowing for medical expenses, recreation or insurance. Food and transportation allowances are meager and there is no allowance for clothing. Only with day care provided, can this household hope to manage.

	PARENT EXPENSES	BUDGET PERCENT
Gross income ($6/hour)	$ 960.00	
Less income tax and FICA	-153.60	15.0
Net pay	806.40	100.0
Food	165.00	16.2
Rent or mortgage (with tax & insurance)	275.00	26.9
Utilities	69.00	6.8
Household operations	24.00	2.8
Furnishings and equipment	0.00	0.0
Car payments	0.00	0.0
Transportation	40.00	8.9
Clothing	0.00	0.0
Personal care	5.00	0.5
Gifts and contributions	0.00	0.0
Recreation	0.00	0.0
Education	0.00	0.0
Medical	0.00	0.0
Life insurance	0.00	0.0
Miscellaneous (day care)	289.80	28.4
Installment debt	0.00	0.0
Savings	0.00	0.0
TOTAL EXPENSES	$1,021.40	100.00

*based on material from the Natrona County D-PASS